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Mary Clarke

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

VOL. IV.

Yet, blame not him, by long injuſtice taught
And baſe ingratitude, the world to ſhun;
Nor marvel much, that where he fondly ſought
Friendſhip and peace, till finding one by one,
His friends all faithleſs, and himſelf undone,
He can no more in confidence repoſe;
Joyleſs to him, ſweet bloom and ſummer ſun!
His, oft a heart, though bleeding with its woes,
That pants the friend to meet, and could forgive its foes!

COURTIER.

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Loin d'aimer la guerre, il l'abhorre ;
En triomphant même il déplore
Les deſaſtres qu'elle produit :
Et couronné par la victoire,
Il gémit de ſa propre gloire,
Si la paix n'en eſt pas le fruit.

BY

MISS PORTER.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

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THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAP. I.

THE firſt week of the Count's confinement was rendered in ſome degree tolerable, by the daily viſits of Mrs. Robſon; who, having brought his drawing materials, enabled him, through the means of the printſeller, to purchaſe ſome civility from the brutal and hardened people who were his gaolers. After the good woman had performed her diurnal kindneſs, Thaddeus uſed to turn to the ſad circumference of his miſerable apartment to ſeek amuſement. When his pencil had accompliſhed its taſk, it wearied him: When he took up a book, having read it before, it failed to engage him. He poſ-

feſſed nothing to beguile the tedious day, and more tedious night. His ſpirit was in ſolitude; in the moſt diſmal ſolitude; baniſhed and ſhut out from all that could render life deſirable.

The elaſticity and enterpriſe of ſoul, inherent in youth, renders no calamity ſo difficult to be borne, as that which fetters its beſt years and moſt active virtues, within the walls of a priſon. Thaddeus felt this benumbing conviction in every pulſe of his ardent and energetic heart. He retraced all that he had been. He looked on what he was. Though he had reaped glory when a boy, his '*noon of manhood*,' his evening ſun, was to waſte its light, and ſet in captivity.

At ſhort and diſtant intervals, ſuch melancholy reveries gave place to the pitying image of Mary Beaufort. It ſometimes viſited him in the day, it always was his companion during the night. He courted her lovely idea, as a ſpell that for a while ſtole him from painful reflections.

With

With an entranced ſoul, he recalled every lineament of her beautiful face, every diſſolving note of that voice, which had hurried him into the raſhneſs of touching her hand. One moment he preſſed her gold chain cloſer to his heart, almoſt believing what Lady Tinemouth had inſinuated; the next, he would ſigh over his credulity, and return with deſpondent, though equally intenſe love, to her bewitching recollection.

The more he meditated on the purity of her manners; the elevated principles to which he could trace her actions; and, above all, the benevolent confidence with which ſhe had ever treated him, (a man contemned by one part of her acquaintance, and merely received on truſt by the remainder,) the more he found reaſons to admire her character and adore herſelf. When he drew a compariſon between Miſs Beaufort, and women of the ſame quality, whom he had ſeen in England and in other countries, he contemplated

with delighted wonder, that ſpotleſs mind, which having paſſed through the various dangers annexed to wealth and faſhion, ſtill bore itſelf uncontaminated. She was beautiful, and ſhe did not regard it; ſhe was accompliſhed, but ſhe did not attempt a diſplay: what ſhe acquired from education, the graces ſo incorporated with her native intelligence, that the perfection of her character ſeemed to have been ſtamped at once, by the beneficent hand of Providence.

Never were her numberleſs attractions ſo faſcinating to Thaddeus, as when he witneſſed the generous eagerneſs with which, forgetful of her own almoſt unparalleled talents, ſhe pointed out merit, and diſpenſed applauſe to the deſerving. Miſs Beaufort's nature was gentle and benevolent; but it was likewiſe, diſtinguiſhing, and animated. Whilſt the Count ſaw that the urbanity of her diſpoſition made her politeneſs univerſal, he perceived, that neither rank, riches, nor

ſplendour,

ſplendour, could extract from her boſom, one ſpark of that lambent flame, which ſtreamed from her heart, like fire to the ſun, towards the united glory of genius and virtue.

He dwelt on her lovely, unſophiſticated character, with an enthuſiaſm bordering on idolatory. He recollected that ſhe had been educated by the mother of Pembroke Somerſet; and, turning from the double remembrance, with a ſigh, fraught with all the bitterneſs and ſweetneſs of love, he acknowledged, how much wiſdom (which includes virtue) gives ſpirit and immortality to beauty; "Yes," cried he, "it is the fragrance of the flower, which lives after the bloom is withered."

From the like ſeducing day-dreams, Thaddeus was one evening awakened by the entrance of the gaoler into his cell. The man preſented a ſealed paper, and told him that he brought it from a ſtranger, who, having paid the debts for which he was confined, immediately withdrew,

desiring that the packet might be delivered to Mr. Constantine.

Scarcely crediting this information, Thaddeus hastily opened the letter, hoping that it might throw some light on his benefactor: a blank cover, enclosing notes to the amount of fifty pounds, presented itself. Surprised at this he ordered the man to leave him, who, without much ceremony, was staring at the money over his shoulder; and sitting down, he tried to conjecture, who could have acted so generously, and yet be so careful to conceal the donor.

He had seen sufficient proofs of a heedless want of charity in Miss Euphemia Dundass, to lead him to suppose, that she could not be so munificent and solicitous of secrecy. Besides, how could she have learnt his situation? He thought it was impossible: and that impossibility compelled an erratic hope, of his present liberty's having sprung from the friendship of Miss Beaufort, to pass by him with painful swiftness.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, ſtarting from his chair, "it is the indefatigable ſpirit of Lady Sara Roos, that I recogniſe in this deed! The generous, but unhappy intereſt which ſhe yet takes in my fate, has diſcovered my laſt misfortune, and thus ſeeks to relieve me!"

The moment he conceived this ſuppoſition, he believed it; and, taking up a pen, with a grateful, though diſturbed ſoul, he addreſſed to her the following guarded note.

To the Right Honourable Lady Sarah Roos.

"An unfortunate exile, who is already overpowered by a ſenſe of not having deſerved the notice which Lady Sara Roos has deigned to take of his misfortunes—was this morning liberated from priſon in a manner ſo generous and delicate, that he can aſcribe the act to no other, than the noble heart of her ladyſhip.

"The object of this bounty, bending under the weight of obligations which he

cannot repay, begs permiſſion to re-incloſe the bills which Lady Sara's agent tranſmitted to him; but, as the deed which procures his freedom cannot be recalled, he accepts, with the moſt grateful emotions, that new inſtance of her ladyſhip's goodneſs.

"*Newgate.*"

Thaddeus diſpatched the letter by a porter; and was preparing another, to acquaint Mrs. Robſon of his releaſe, when the good woman made her appearance. She haſtened up to him with an animated countenance, and exclaimed before he had time to ſpeak, "Dear ſir! I have ſeen a dear ſweet lady, who promiſed not to ſleep till you are out of this horrid place!"

The ſuſpicions of the Count, that his benefactreſs was indeed Lady Sara Roos, were now confirmed: ſeating his landlady in the only chair which furniſhed the apartment; to ſatisfy her humility, he took his ſtation on the table, and then ſaid, "The lady

lady has already fulfilled her engagement; I am free; and only wait for an anſwer to my acknowledgments before I quit the priſon."

At this aſſurance, the delighted Mrs. Robſon, crying and laughing by turns, did not ceaſe her ejaculations of joy, until the meſſenger, who had taken the letter to St. James's Place, returned with a reply written by her ladyſhip, and evidently blotted with tears. Thaddeus took out the re-incloſed bills with a fluſhed cheek, and read as follows:

"I cannot be miſtaken in recogniſing the proud and high-ſoul'd Conſtantine, in the writer of the lines which I hold in my hand. Could any thing have imparted to me more comfort, than your generous belief, that there is indeed ſome virtue left in my wretched and repentant heart, it would have ariſen from the conſcious-neſs of having been the happy perſon, who has ſuccoured you in your diſtreſs.

But no: that enjoyment was beyond my deſerving. The bliſs of being the lightener of your ſorrows was reſerved by heaven for a leſs criminal creature. I did not even know that you were in priſon. Since our dreadful parting, I have never dared to inquire after you; and much as it might conſole me to ſerve one ſo truly valued, I will not inſult your nice honour, by offering any further inſtance of my friendſhip, than what will evince my ſoul's gratitude to your prayers, and my acquieſcence with the commands of duty.

"My huſband is here, without perceiving the ravages, which miſery and remorſe have made in my unhappy heart. Time perhaps may render me leſs unworthy of his tenderneſs: at preſent I deteſt myſelf.

"I return the bills; you may ſafely uſe them, for they never were mine.

"S. R."

The noble heart of Thaddeus, bled over every line of this letter. He ſaw that it bore

bore a ſtamp of truth, which did not leave him a moment in doubt that he owed his releaſe to ſome other hand. Whilſt he folded it up, his ſuſpicions next lighted on Lady Tinemouth. He had received one ſhort letter from her ladyſhip, ſince her departure, mentioning Maria's ſtaying in town to meet Mr. Montreſor; Miſs Beaufort's detention on account of Mrs. Dorothy's accident; and cloſing with the intelligence of her own arrival at the Wold. He was ſtruck with the idea, that as he delayed anſwering this letter, in conſequence of his late embarraſſment, muſt have made inquiries after him; and probably Miſs Egerton was the lady who viſited Mrs. Robſon; and, finding the information true, had executed the Counteſs's commiſſion to obtain his releaſe.

According to theſe ſuppoſitions, he queſtioned his landlady about the appearance of the lady whom ſhe had ſeen. Mrs. Robſon replied, "She was rather tall, but ſo wrapped up, I could neither ſee

her face nor figure, though I am certain, from the ſoftneſs of her voice, ſhe muſt be both young and handſome. Sweet creature! I am ſure ſhe wept two or three times. Beſides, ſhe is the moſt charitable ſoul alive, next to you, ſir, for ſhe gave me a purſe with nineteen guineas; and ſhe told me, that ſhe knew your honour's Engliſh friends."

This narration, ſubſtantiating his hope of Lady Tinemouth's being his benefactreſs, that the kind Maria was her agent, and the gentleman who defrayed the debt, Mr. Montreſor; he was eaſier under an obligation, which a myſterious liberation would have doubled. He knew the Counteſs's maternal love for him. To reject her preſent benefaction, would be to ſacrifice gratitude, to an exceſſive and haughty delicacy. Convinced, *that nothing can be great, that it is great to deſpiſe;* he no longer heſitated to accept Lady Tinemouth's bounty, but ſmothered in his breaſt the embers of a proud, repulſive ardour,

ardour, which having burſt forth in the firſt hour of his misfortunes, was ever ready to conſume any wiſh that might oppreſs him with the weight of obligation.

Thaddeus quitted his cell. He ordered a coach to the great gate of Newgate; and with thankfulneſs to Heaven, for again being permitted to taſte the wholeſome breeze of a free atmoſphere, handed his delighted landlady into the vehicle.

So true it is, that advantages are only appreciated by compariſon; when the Count re-entered his humble apartment in St. Martin's lane, he conſidered it a palace of luxury, oppoſed to the dungeon he had left.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Robſon, pointing to a chair, "there is the very ſeat in which that dear Lady ſat! Sweet creature! If I had known that I durſt believe all ſhe promiſed, I would have fallen on my knees, and kiſſed her feet, for bringing back your dear ſelf!"

"I thank you, my good madam," returned

turned Thaddeus, with a ſmile, and a tear at ſuch ardent demonſtration of affection; "but where is little Nancy, that I may ſhake hands with her?"

The child welcomed the Count with thoſe animated expreſſions of joy, inſeparable from a good and unexperienced heart. It being late, he retired at an early hour to his pillow, where he found that repoſe, which had been ſought in vain, within the gloomy and (he ſuppoſed) eternal walls of a priſon.

In the morning, he was awakened by the light footſteps of his pretty waiting-maid entering the front room. His chamber door being open, he aſked her what was the hour? ſhe replied, 'nine o'clock; adding that ſhe had brought a letter, which one of the waiters from Slaughter's coffee-houſe had juſt left, with the information that he did ſo by the orders of a footman in rich livery.

Thaddeus deſired that it might be given to him. The child obeyed, and quitted

ted the room. He saw that the superscription was in Miss Dundas's hand; and opening it with pleasure, because every thing interested him which came from the house which contained Mary Beaufort, to his amazement and consternation, he read the following passionate and intemperate lines:

"*To Mr. Constantine.*

"Mr. Constantine,

"By a mirculous circumstance, this morning, your deep and daring plan of villainy has been discovered to Lady D— and myself. The deluded victim, whom your arts and falsehoods, would have seduced to dishonour her family by connecting herself with a vagabond, has at length seen through her error, and now detests you as much as ever your insufferable presumption could have hoped that she would distinguish you with regard. Thanks be to Heaven! you are completely

pletely expoſed! This young woman of faſhion (whoſe name I will not truſt in the ſame page with yours) has made a full confeſſion of your villainous ſeductions; of her own reprehenſible weakneſs, in ever having deigned to liſten to ſo low a creature. She deſires me to aſſure you, that ſhe hates you; and commands you never again to attempt the inſolence of appearing in her ſight. Indeed, this is the language of every ſoul in this houſe, Lady D——, Mrs. D—— S——, Miſs B——; beſides that of

D—— D——."

"*Hanley Street.*"

Thaddeus read this ridiculous letter twice, before he could perfectly comprehend its meaning. In a paroxyſm of indignation at the vile ſubterfuge under which he did not doubt that Euphemia had ſcreened ſome accidental diſcovery of her abſurd paſſion, he haſtily threw on his clothes, and determined, though in defiance of Miſs Dundas's mandates, to

fly

fly to Harley-ſtreet, and clear himſelf in the eyes of Miſs Beaufort, and her venerable aunt.

Having flown rather than walked, he arrived in ſight of Lady Dundas's houſe, juſt as a coach full of her ladyſhip's maids and packages drove from the door. Hurrying up the ſtep, he aſked the porter who was ſtanding in the hall, if Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet were at home.

"No," replied the man; "ſhe and Miſs Beaufort, with Miſs Dundas and Mr. Somerſet, went out of town this morning by eight o'clock; and my lady and Miſs Euphemia, about an hour ago, ſet off for Dumbarton, in Scotland, where they mean to ſtay all the ſummer."

At this information, which ſeemed to be the ſealing of his condemnation with Mary, the heart of Thaddeus was pierced to the core. Unacquainted, until this moment, with the torments attending the calumniated, he could ſcarcely ſubdue the tempeſt in his breaſt, when forced to

receive

receive the conviction, that the woman whom he loved above all the world, now regarded him, as not merely a villain, but the meaneſt of villains.

He returned home indignant and agitated. The knowledge that Pembroke Somerſet had probably liſtened to the falſehoods of Euphemia, without ſuggeſting one word in defence of him, who once was his friend, inflicted a pang more deadly than the reſt. Shutting himſelf within his apartment, toſſed and tortured in ſoul, he traverſed the room, until, reſolved to ſeek redreſs from the advice of Lady Tynemouth, he deſcended the ſtairs, and telling Mrs. Robſon, that he ſhould leave London next morning for Lincolnſhire, begged her not to be uneaſy on his account, as he went on buſineſs, and would return in a few days.

The good woman almoſt wept at this intelligence; and when ſhe ſaw him depart, followed the wheels of the ſtage-coach with ſighs and bleſſings. His long

journey

journey paſſed in reſentful reveries; and affectionate anticipations of the moment, in which he ſhould pour out his gratitude to the maternal tenderneſs of Lady Tynemouth, and learn from her delicacy and experience, how to efface from the minds of Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet and her lovely niece, ſentiments of him, ſo diſhonouring, torturing, and falſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE porter at Lady Dundas's was ſtrictly correct in his account, reſpecting the deſtination of the diſperſed members of her ladyſhip's houſehold.

Whilſt Pembroke Somerſet was ſullenly executing his forced act of benevolence at Newgate, Miſs Dundas ſuddenly took it into her ever-ſcheming head, to compare the merits of Somerſet's rich expectancy, with the pennyleſs certainty of Laſcelles. She conſidered, how high the wife of a baronet ſtood in the train of precedence, over the humble *cara ſpoſa* of a man, owning no other rank, than a reflected luſtre, ſhot from the coronet of an elder brother. Lady Somerſet, ſhe thought, would be a prettier ſalutation, than the empty courteſy of Honourable. Beſides,

Pembroke

Pembroke was very handſome; Laſcelles, only tolerably ſo: indeed ſome women had preſumed to call him ugly; but they were odd mortals, who, not believing the *metempſychoſis* doctrine of the taylor and his decorating adjuncts, could not comprehend, that although a mere human creature can have no ſuch property, a man of faſhion may poſſeſs an *elixir vitæ*, which makes age youth, deformity, beauty, and even transforms vice into virtue.

In ſpite of remembrance, which reminded Diana, how often, amongſt a little bevy of females, ſhe had contended with acrimony, that all Mr. Laſcelles' teeth were his own; that his noſe was not a bit too long, being an exact *fac ſimile* of the ſame feature, which reared its ſublime curve over the capacious mouth of his noble brother Lord Caſtle-Conway; notwithſtanding this, the Pythagorean pretenſions of faſhion began to loſe their aſcendancy; and, in the receſſes of her mind, when Miſs Dundas compared the light

light elegance of Pembroke's figure, with the heavy limbs of her preſent lover; Pembroke's dark and ever animated eyes, with the gooſeberry orbs of Laſcelles, ſhe dropped the parallel; and reſolving to captivate the heir of Somerſet-Caſtle, admitted no remorſe at jilting the brother of Caſtle-Conway.

To this end, before Pembroke's return from Newgate, Diana told her mother of her intention to accompany Mrs. Dorothy down to the Baronet's; where ſhe would remain, until her ladyſhip ſhould think, that Euphemia might be truſted to rejoin her in town. Neither Mrs. Dorothy nor Miſs Beaufort liked this arrangement; and with an aching heart, the latter prepared to take her ſeat next morning, at an early hour, in the travelling equipage, which was to convey them all into Leiceſterſhire.

At ſupper, Pembroke ſullenly informed his couſin of the ſucceſs of her commands; — that Mr. Conſtantine was free.

This

This assurance, though imparted with so ungracious an air, laid her head with less distraction on her pillow: and as she stepped into Sir Robert's carriage next day, enabled her, with more ease, to deck her lips with smiles. She felt that the penetrating eyes of Mr. Somerset were never withdrawn from her face; offended with his perverseness, and their scrutiny, she tried to baffle their inspection. She attempted gaiety, when she gladly would have wept. But when the coach mounted the top of Highgate-Hill, and discovered a last view of that city, which contained the being, whose happiness was the sole object of her thoughts and prayers, she leaned out of the window, to hide a tear which she could not repress; feeling that another and another would start, she complained of the dust, and pulling her veil over her eyes, drew back into the corner of the carriage. The trembling of her voice and hands during the performance of this little artifice, too well explained to

Pembroke what was paſſing in her mind: At once diſpelling the gloom which ſhrouded his own countenance, he turned towards her with compaſſionate tenderneſs in his words and looks; he called her attention, by degrees to the happy domeſtic ſcene ſhe was to meet at the caſtle; and thus gradually ſoftening her diſpleaſure, into the eaſy converſation of reciprocal affection, he rendered the remainder of their long journey leſs irkſome.

When at the end of the ſecond day, Miſs Beaufort found herſelf in the old avenue leading to the baſe of the hill which ſuſtains the revered walls of Somerſet-Caſtle, a mingled emotion took poſſeſſion of her breaſt; and when the carriage arrived at the foot of the higheſt terrace, ſhe ſprung impatiently out of it, and haſtening up the ſtone ſtairs into the front hall, met her uncle at the door of the breakfaſt parlour where he held out his arms to receive her.

"My Mary! My darling!" cried he, embracing

embracing her now wet cheek, and straining her throbbing bosom to his own, "Why, my dear love," added he, almost carrying her into the room, "I am afraid that this visit to town has injured your nerves! Whence arises this agitation?"

She knew that it had injured her peace; and, now that the flood-gates of her long repelled tears were opened, it was beyond her art, or the soothings of her affectionate uncle, to stay them. A moment afterwards, her cousin entered the room, followed by Mrs. Dorothy and Miss Dundas. Miss Beaufort hastily rose to conceal what she could not check, and kissing Sir Robert's hand, asked permission to retire, under the pretence of regaining those spirits which had been dissipated by the fatigues of her journey.

In her own chamber, she did, indeed, struggle to recover herself. She shuddered at the impetuosity of her emotions, when once abandoned of their reins; and resolved from this hour to hold a stricter

guard over the conſequences of her ill-fated paſſion.

She ſat down in the window of her apartment; and looking down the extenſive vale of Somerſet, watched the romantic wanderings of the Witham, winding its courſe through the domains of the caſtle, and nouriſhing the roots of thoſe immenſe oaks, which ſtill wave their expanded branches over its quiet ſtream. She reflected on the revolution which had taken place in her mind, ſince ſhe walked on its banks, the evening that preceded her viſit to London. Then, ſhe was free as air, and gay as the lark; each object was bright and lovely to her eyes: hope ſeemed to woo her from every green ſlope, every remote dingle: all nature breathed of joy, becauſe her own breaſt was the abode of gladneſs. Now, all continued the ſame, but ſhe was changed. Surrounded by beauty, ſhe acknowledged its preſence; the ſweetneſs of the flowers bathed her ſenſes in fragrance; the ſetting ſun, gild-

ing

ing the heights, ſhed a yellow glory over the diſtant hills; the birds were hailing the fallen dew which ſpangled every leaf; ſhe gazed around, and ſighed heavily when ſhe ſaid to herſelf, "Even in this paradiſe I ſhall be wretched. Alas! my heart is far away! My ſoul lingers about one, whom I may never more behold! about one, who may ſoon ceaſe to remember that ſuch a being as Mary Beaufort is in exiſtence. He will leave England!" cried ſhe, raiſing her hands and eyes to the glowing heavens. "He will live, he will die, far, far, from me! In a diſtant land he will wed another, whilſt I ſhall know no wiſh that ſtrays from him."

Whilſt ſhe indulged in theſe ſoliloquies, ſhe forgot both Sir Robert and her reſolution, until he ſent her maid to beg, that if ſhe were better, ſhe would come down and make tea for him. At this ſummons, Miſs Beaufort dried her eyes, and deſcended with an aſſumed ſerenity, to the ſaloon, where the family were aſſembled. The

Baronet having greeted Miſs Dundas with an hoſpitable welcome, ſeated himſelf between his ſiſter and his ſon; and, whilſt he received his favourite beverage from the hands of his beloved niece, he found that comfort once more re-entered his boſom.

Sir Robert Somerſet was a man whoſe appearance alone attracted reſpect. His perſon bore the ſtamp of dignity; and his manners, which poſſeſſed the exquiſite poliſh of travel, ſecured him univerſal eſteem. Though little beyond fifty, the various perplexities which diſtreſſed his youth, not only rendered his hair prematurely grey, but by clouding his once brilliant eyes, with thoughtfulneſs, marked his aſpect with old age and melancholy. The baronet's entrance into gay life, was celebrated for wit and vivacity: He was the animating ſpirit of every party; when, ſtrange to tell, an inexplicable metamorphoſis took place. Soon after his return from abroad, his marriage with Miſs Beaufort

fort (a woman whom he loved to madneſs) taking place, exceſs of happineſs ſeemed to change his nature, and gave his character a gradual tinge of ſadneſs. After his wife's death, the alteration in his mind produced ſtill more extraordinary effects, and ſhewed itſelf more than once in all the terrors of approaching inſanity.

The lateſt attack of that kind which aſſailed him, was about the middle of the laſt winter; it ſeized him under the appearance of a ſwoon, as he ſat reading the newſpaper at breakfaſt; he was carried to bed, and awoke in a delirium, which threatened either immediate death, or the total extinction of his intellects. However, neither of theſe dreads being confirmed; in the courſe of ſeveral weeks, to the wonder of every body, he recovered both his health and his ſound mind. Notwithſtanding this happy event, the circumſtances of his danger, ſo deeply affected his family, that he continued to be an object of very anxious attention. Indeed

ſolicitude did not terminate with them: the munificence of his diſpoſition, having ſpread itſelf through every county in which he owned a rood of land, as many prayers aſcended for the repoſe of his ſpirit, as ever petitioned heaven, from the mouths of '*monkiſh beadſmen*,' in favour of power or virtue.

Since the demiſe of Lady Somerſet, this excellent man drew all his comfort from the amiable qualities of his ſon Pembroke. Sometimes in his liveller hours, which came '*like angel viſits, few and far between*,' he amuſed himſelf with the playfulneſs of the little Earl of Arun, the pompous erudition of Mr. Loftus (who was become his lordſhip's tutor), and with giving occaſional entertainments to the gentry in his neighbourhood.

Of all the perſonages contained within this circle, (which the hoſpitality of Sir Robert, extended to a circumference of thirty miles,) Lord Berrington was the moſt reſpected.

The

The numerous viſitants that attended the Somerſet-hunt, were too gay to be admitted with intimacy. A ſon of one of theſe itinerant families, (which ever on the full chace of pleaſure, had fixed itſelf at Wood-hill Lodge, on the right of the little town of Grantham,) by calling at the caſtle, ſoon after the arrival of the London party, cauſed a trifling change in its ſocial arrangement.

When Richard Shafto was uſhered into the ſaloon, he nodded to Sir Robert, and, turning his back on the ladies, told Pembroke, that he had ridden to Somerſet, on purpoſe to bring him to Woodhill Lodge.

"Upon my ſoul," cried he, "if you don't come, I will leave my mother. Would you believe it, that on account of Sir Hallerand having gone out plenipotentiary to ſome damned place on the continent, ſhe has taken into her head to ruſticate till his return? Upon my ſoul, I am moped to death! There is not a creature, but yourſelf, within twenty miles, to whom I would

ſpeak; not a man worth a ſixpence. I wiſh to heaven, my father had broken his neck, before he accepted that raſcally embaſſy, which encumbers me with the charge of an old woman!"

After this dutiful wiſh, which brought down a weighty admonition from Mrs. Dorothy, the young gentleman promiſed to beg her pardon for his filial irreverence, provided that ſhe could perſuade Pembroke to accompany him to the lodge. Mr. Somerſet did not ſhew much alacrity in his conſent; but purpoſely to rid his family of ſuch a noiſy gueſt, he roſe from his chair, and acquieſcing in the ſacrifice of a few days to good-nature, bade his father farewell, and gave orders for a ride to Grantham.

As ſoon as the gentlemen left the ſaloon, Miſs Dundas ran up ſtairs, and, from her dreſſing-room window in the weſt tower, purſued the ſteps of their horſes, as they cantered down the winding ſteep, into the high-road. An abrupt angle of the hill hiding

hiding them at once from her view, ſhe turned round with a toſs of the head, and flinging herſelf into her chair, exclaimed, "Now I ſhall be bored to death by this abominably ſtupid family! I wiſh the devil had taken Shafto before he thought of coming hither!"

In conſequence of the humour, which engendered the above no very flattering compliment, to the ſociety at the caſtle, Miſs Dundas deſcended to the dining-room, with ſulky looks and a chilling air. She ate what the baronet laid on her plate, with an indolent appetite; cut her meat careleſsly, and dragged the vegetables over the table-cloth. Mrs. Dorothy coloured at this indifference to the uſual neatneſs of her damaſk covers; but Miſs Dundas was ſo completely in the ſullens, that, heedleſs of any other feelings than her own, ſhe continued to pull and knock about the things juſt as her ill humour dictated.

The petulance of this lady's behaviour,

did not in the leaſt aſſimilate with the cuſtomary decorum of Sir Robert's table; and, when the cloth was drawn, he could not refrain from expreſſing his concern, that Somerſet Caſtle appeared ſo little calculated to afford ſatisfaction to a daughter of Lady Dundas. Miſs Dundas attempted ſome awkward declaration, that ſhe never was more amuſed, never happier. But the ſmall credit which Sir Robert gave to her aſſertion, was fully warranted the next morning, by the ready manner in which ſhe accepted a caſual invitation, to ſpend the enſuing day and night at Lady Shafto's. Her ladyſhip called on Mrs. Dorothy, and intending to have a party in the evening, invited the two young ladies to return with her to Grantham, and be her gueſts for a week. Miſs Beaufort, whoſe ſpirits were far from tranquillized, declined her civility; but with a gleam of pleaſure, ſhe heard it accepted by Miſs Dundas, who departed with her ladyſhip for the lodge.

Whilſt the enraptured Diana, all life and glee, bowled along with lady Shafto, anticipated the delight of once more ſeating herſelf at the elbow of Pembroke Somerſet; Mary Beaufort, relieved from a load of ill-requited attentions, walked out into the park, to enjoy, in ſolitude, the intoxicating ſorrow of thinking on the unhappy and far diſtant Conſtantine. Regardleſs of the way, her footſteps, though robbed of elaſticity by nightly watching and daily regret, led her beyond the park, to the ruined church of Woolthorpe, its ſouthern boundary. Her eyes were fixed on the oppoſite horizon. It was the extremity of Leiceſterſhire; and far, far behind thoſe hills, was that London which contained the object deareſt to her ſoul. The wind ſeemed ſcarcely to breathe as it floated towards her; but it came from that quarter; and, believing it laden with every ſweet which love can fancy, ſhe threw back her veil to inhale its balm; then blaming herſelf for ſuch baby weak-

neſs, ſhe turned, bluſhing, homewards, and wept at, what ſhe thought, her unreaſonably tenacious paſſion.

The arrival of Miſs Dundas at the lodge, was communicated to the two young men on their return from a traverſe on foot, of half the country in queſt of game. The news drew an oath from Shafto; but rather pleaſed Somerſet, who augured ſome amuſement from her attempts at wit and judgment. Tired to death, and dinner being over when they entered, with ravenous appetites they devoured their uncomfortable meal in a remote room; then, throwing themſelves along the ſofas, they yawned, and ſlept for near two hours.

Pembroke waking firſt, ſuddenly jumped on the floor, and ſhaking his diſordered clothes, exclaimed, "Shafto! Get up. This is abominable! Efaith, I cannot help thinking, that if we ſpend one half of our days in pleaſure, and the other in lolling off its fatigues, we ſhall have paſſed

thro'

through life more to our ſhame than our profit!"

"Then you may take the ſhame, and leave me the profit;" cried his companion, turning himſelf round: "ſo good night to you."

Pembroke rang the bell. A ſervant entered.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Eight, Sir."

"Who are above?"

"My lady, Sir, and a large party of ladies."

"There now!" cried Shafto, yawning and kicking out his legs. "You ſurely won't go to be bored with ſuch damned maudlin company?"

"I chooſe to join your mother;" replied Pembroke. "Are there any gentlemen, Stephen?"

"One, Sir; Doctor Denton."

"Confound you!" roared Shafto, "what do you ſtand jabbering there for? You won't let me ſleep. Can't you ſend away the fellow, and go look yourſelf?"

"I will.

"I will, if you can perſuade yourſelf to riſe off that ſofa, and come with me."

"May the devil catch me if I do! Get about your buſineſs, and leave me to mine."

"You are incorrigible, Shafto!" returned Pembroke, as he cloſed the door.

He went up ſtairs to change his dreſs; and before he gained the ſecond flight, he reſolved, not to ſpend two other whole days, in the company of ſuch an ignorant unmannerly cub.

On Mr. Somerſet's entrance into Lady Shafto's drawing room, he ſaw many ladies; but only one gentleman, who was the before-mentioned Dr. Denton; a poor ſhallow-headed, paraſitical animal. Pembroke, having ſeen enough of him, to deſpiſe his pretenſions both to ſcience and ſincerity, returned his wide ſmirk and eager inquiries, with a ceremonious bow, and took his ſeat by the ſide of the now delighted Miſs Dundaſs. The vivid ſpirits of Diana, which ſhe uſed all her art to render

render peculiarly ſparkling when he made his appearance, entertained him;—when compared with the inſipid ſameneſs of her ladyſhip, or the brutal ribaldry of her ſon, her mirth was wit, and her remarks wiſdom.

"Dear Mr. Somerſet!" cried ſhe, "how good you are to break this ſad ſolemnity. I vow, until you ſhewed your face, I thought the days of paganiſm were revived, and that, lacking men, we were aſſembled here to celebrate the myſteries of the *Bona Dea*."

"Lacking men!" replied he, ſmiling, "You have overlooked the aſſiduous Doctor Denton?"

"O, no; that is a cameleon in man's clothing. He breathes air, he eats air, he emits air; and a moſt peſtilential breath it is; only obſerve how he is pouring nonſenſe into the ear of yonder ſable ſtatue."

Pembroke directed his eyes as Miſs Dundas deſired him; they fell on Doctor Denton,

Denton, who ſtood whiſpering, and bowing before a lady in black, who ſat, almoſt concealed by the window curtain. The lady put up her lip, the Doctor proceeded; ſhe frowned, he would not be daunted; the lady roſe from her ſeat, and ſlightly bending her head, croſſed the room. Whilſt Mr. Somerſet was contemplating her majeſtic figure, and fine, though pale features, Miſs Dundas touched his arm, and ſmiling ſatirically, repeated, in an affected voice:

"Hail penſive Nun! devout and holy!
"Hail divineſt melancholy!"

"If ſhe be melancholy," returned Pembroke, unconſciouſly, ſighing, "I would for ever ſay,

"Hence, unholy Mirth, of Folly born!"

Miſs Dundas reddened. She never liked this intereſting woman, who was not only too handſome for competition, but poſſeſſed an underſtanding, whoſe temper would

would not tolerate ignorance and presumption. Diana's ill-natured impertinence, having several times received deserved chastisement from that quarter, she was vexed to the soul, when Pembroke closed his animated response with the question, "Who is she?"

Miss Dundas, rather too bitterly for the success of her design on his heart, iterated his words, and then answered, "Why, she is crazed. She lives in a place called Harrowby Abbey, at the top of that hill;" continued she, pointing through the opposite window, to a distant rising ground, on which the moon was shining brightly; "and I am told, frightens the cottagers out of their wits by her midnight strolls."

Hardly knowing how to credit this wild account, Pembroke asked his informer if she were serious.

"Never more so. Her eyes are uncommonly wild."

"You must be jesting," returned he; "they seem perfectly reasonable."

Miss

Miſs Dundas laughed. "Like Hamlet's, they '*know not ſeems, but have that within which paſſeth ſhew!*' believe me, ſhe is mad enough for bedlam; and of that I could ſoon convince you. I wonder how Lady Shafto thought of inviting her at all."

"Well," cried Pembroke, "if thoſe features announce madneſs, I ſhall never admire a look of ſenſe again."

"Bleſs us," exclaimed Miſs Dundas, "you are wonderfully ſtruck! Don't you ſee ſhe is old enough to be your mother?"

"That may be," anſwered he, ſmiling; "nevertheleſs, ſhe is one of the moſt lovely women I ever beheld. Come, tell me her name."

"I will ſatisfy you in a moment," rejoined Diana; "and then away with your rhapſodies! She is the very Counteſs of Tinemouth, who brought, as her moſt particular friend, that vagabond foreigner to our houſe, who would have run off with Phemy."

"Lady

"Lady Tinemouth!" exclaimed Pembroke, "I never saw her before. My ever lamented mother met her, whilst I was abroad, and she esteemed her highly. Pray present me to her!"

"Impossible," replied Diana, vexed at the turn which his curiosity had taken; "I wrote to her about the insidious wretch, and now we don't speak."

"Then I will introduce myself," answered he: he was moving away, when Miss Dundas (whose delight lay in tormenting those whom she could not subjugate,) caught hold of his arm, and, by some attempts at badinage and raillery, held him in his place, until the Countess made her farewell curtsey to Lady Shafto, and the door was closed.

Disappointed at this manœuvre, Pembroke re-seated himself; and wondering why his aunt and cousin had not heard of her Ladyship's arrival at Harrowby, he determined to wait on her next day. Regardless of every word which the provoked

Diana

Diana addreſſed to him, he remained ſilent and meditating, until the loud voice of Shafto roaring in his ear, made him turn ſuddenly round. Miſs Dundas tried to laugh at his reverie, though ſhe knew that ſuch a flagrant inſtance of inattention was death to her hopes; but Pembroke, not inclined to partake in the jeſt, coolly aſked his beariſh companion what he wanted?

"Nothing, upon my ſoul," cried he, "but to hear you ſpeak. What the devil were you looking at on the carpet; Miſs Dundas tells me, that you have loſt your heart, to yonder grim Counteſs, whom my mother wanted me to gallant up the hill?"

"Shafto!" anſwered Pembroke, riſing from his chair, "you cannot be ſpeaking of Lady Tinemouth?"

"Efaith I am," roared he: "and if ſhe be ſuch a *ſcamp* as to live without a carriage, I won't be her lacquey for nothing. Two miles are not to be tramped over by

me,

me, with no better companion than an old painted woman of quality."

"Surely you cannot mean," returned Pembroke, "that her ladyſhip was to walk from this place?"

"Without a doubt," cried Shafto, burſting into a horſe laugh: "you would be clever to ſee my Lady Stingy in any other carriage than her clogs."

Irritated at the malice of Miſs Dundas, and deſpiſing the vulgar illiberality of Shafto, Pembroke, without deigning a reply, abruptly left the room; and, haſtening out of the houſe, ran, rather than walked, in hopes of overtaking the Counteſs, before ſhe reached Harrowby.

He croſſed the little wooden bridge which lies over the Witham; he ſcoured the fields; he leaped every ſtile and gate in his way, gained the incloſure that leads to the top of the hill; where he deſcried a light moving, and very rightly conjectured that it muſt be the lantern carried by her ladyſhip's attendant. Another

ſpring

ſpring over the ſhattered fence, cleared all obſtacles; and he found himſelf, cloſe to Lady Tinemouth, who was leaning on the arm of a gentleman. Pembroke ſtopped at this ſight; ſuppoſing that ſhe had been met by ſome perſon belonging to the town, whoſe readier gallantry, now occupied the place, which Miſs Dundas prevented him from filling, he was preparing to retreat, when Lady Tinemouth happening to turn her head, imagined from the heſitating embaraſſment of his manner, that he was a ſtranger who had loſt his way, and accoſted him with that inquiry.

Pembroke bowed in ſome confuſion, and related the ſimple fact, of his having heard, that ſhe quitted Lady Shafto's houſe without any guard but the ſervant; and, that he had hurried out, the moment he learned the circumſtance, to proffer his ſervices. The Counteſs not only thanked him for ſuch attention, but, conſtrained by a civility which at that inſtant ſhe could have wiſhed not to have been neceſſary, aſked

aſked him to walk forward with her to the Abbey, and partake of ſome refreſhment.

"But," added ſhe, "though I perfectly recollect having ſeen another gentleman in Lady Shafto's room, beſides Doctor Denton, I have not the honour of knowing your name?"

"It is Somerſet," returned Pembroke: "I am the ſon of that Lady Somerſet, who, during the laſt year of her life, had the happineſs of being intimate with your ladyſhip."

Lady Tinemouth declared her pleaſure at this meeting; and turning to the gentleman, who was walking in ſilence by her ſide, "Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid ſhe, "allow me to introduce to you, the couſin of the amiable Miſs Beaufort."

Thaddeus, who had too well recogniſed the voice of his falſe friend, in the firſt accents which he addreſſed to the Counteſs, with a ſwelling heart, bent his head to the cold ſalutation of Somerſet. Hearing that her ladyſhip's companion was the

ſame

ſame Conſtantine whom he liberated from priſon, Pembroke was ſtimulated with a deſire to unmaſk his double villainy to Lady Tinemouth; and conceiving a curioſity to ſee the man, whoſe perſon and meretricious qualities, blinded even the judgment of his aunt; he readily obeyed the ſecond invitation of the Counteſs, and conſented to go home and ſup with her.

Meanwhile, Thaddeus was agitated with a variety of emotions. Every tone of Pembroke's voice reminding him of happier days, pierced his heart, whilſt a ſenſe of his ingratitude, awakened all the pride and indignation of his ſoul. Full of reſentment, he determined, that whatever might be the reſult, he would not ſhrink from an interview, the anticipation of which, Pembroke (who had received from himſelf an intimation of the name he aſſumed,) ſeemed to regard with ſuch indifference.

Lady Tinemouth not imagining that Somerſet and the Count had any perſonal knowledge

knowledge of each other, begged the gentlemen to accompany her into the ſupper parlour. Pembroke, with no inconſiderable degree of rudeneſs, puſhed by Thaddeus, and entered the room before him. The Count was ſo ſhocked at this inſtance of ungrateful defiance, and ſo inſulted in every nerve, that he was obliged to pauſe a moment in the hall, to ſummon coolneſs, to follow him with a compoſed ſtep, and diſpaſſionate countenance. He accompliſhed this conqueſt over himſelf; and taking off his hat, laid it down on the ſofa. Lady Tynemouth began to expreſs her joy at his arrival. The eyes of Pembroke, fixed on the calm, but ſevere aſpect of the man before him: he ſtood by the table with ſuch an air of princely greatneſs, that the candid heart of Pembroke Somerſet ſoon whiſpered to him, "*Surely, nothing ill can dwell in that breaſt!*"

Still his eyes followed him, when he turned round, and when he bent his head

to anſwer the Counteſs, in a voice ſo low, that it eſcaped his ear. Pembroke was bewildered. There was a ſomething in the features, in the mein of this foreigner, ſo like his friend Sobieſki! But then Sobieſki was all frankneſs and animation; his cheek bloomed with the rich colouring of youth and happineſs; his eyes flaſhed pleaſure, and his lips were decked with ſmiles. On the contrary, the perſon before him was not only conſiderably taller, and of more manly proportions, but his face was pale, reſerved, and haughty: beſides he did not appear even to recollect the name of Somerſet; and what at once deſtroyed the ſuppoſition, his own was Conſtantine.

Theſe reaſonings having quickly paſſed through the mind of Pembroke, they left his heart unſatisfied. The conflict of his mind flushed his cheek; his boſom beat; and, keeping his ſearching and ardent gaze rivetted on the man, who was either his friend, or his counterpart, Lady Tynemouth withdrew from the table, and the

eyes

eyes of the two young men met. Thaddeus turned paler than before. There is an intelligence in the interchange of looks, which cannot be miſtaken; it is the communication of ſouls, and there is no deception in their language. Pembroke flew forward, and catching hold of his friend's hand, exclaimed in an impetuous voice, "Am I right? Are you Sobieſki?"

"I am," returned Thaddeus, almoſt inarticulate with emotion, and hardly knowing what to underſtand by Somerſet's behaviour.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, ſtill graſping his hand, "and can you have forgotten your friend Pembroke Somerſet?"

The ingenuous heart of Thaddeus, acknowledged the words and manner of Pembroke, to be the language of truth; and, truſting that ſome miſtake had involved his former conduct, he at once caſt off all ſuſpicion, and throwing his arms around him, ſtrained him to his breaſt, and burſt into tears.

Lady Tynemouth, who during this ſcene ſtood mute with ſurpriſe, now advanced to the friends, who were weeping on each other's necks, and taking a hand of each, "My dear Sobieſki," cried ſhe, "Why did you withhold the knowledge of this friendſhip from me! Had you told me that you and Mr. Somerſet were acquainted, this happy meeting might have been accompliſhed ſooner."

"Yes," replied Pembroke, turning to the Counteſs, and wiping away the tears which were trembling on his cheek, "nothing could have given me pain at this moment, but the conviction, that he who was the preſerver of my life, and my moſt generous protector, ſhould, in this country, have endured the moſt abject diſtreſs, rather than let me know that it was in my power to be grateful."

Thaddeus took out his handkerchief, and for a few moments concealed his face. The Counteſs looked on him with tenderneſs; and believing that he would ſooner

regain

regain compoſure, were he alone with his friend, ſhe ſtole unobſerved out of the room.

Pembroke affectionately reſumed; "But, I hope, dear Sobieſki, that you will never leave me more. I have an excellent father, who, when he is made acquainted with my obligations to you and your noble family, will glory in loving you as a ſon."

Thaddeus having ſubdued '*the woman in his heart*,' raiſed his head, with an expreſſion in his eyes, far different from that which chilled the blood of Pembroke, on their firſt encounter.

"Circumſtances," ſaid he, "dear Somerſet, have made me greatly injure you. A ſtrange neglect on your ſide, ſince we ſeparated at Villanow, gave the firſt blow to my confidence in your friendſhip. Though I loſt your direct addreſs, I wrote to you often, and yet you perſevered in ſilence. When I came to England, after having witneſſed the deſtruction of all that was dear to me in Poland, and then

of Poland itſelf, I wiſhed to give your faithfulneſs another chance; I addreſſed two letters to you; I even delivered the laſt at your door myſelf, and I ſaw you in the window when I ſent it in.

"By all that is ſacred," cried Pembroke vehemently, and amazed, "I never ſaw any letter from you! I wrote you many. I never heard of theſe you mention. Indeed, I ſhould even now have been ignorant of the Palatine's, and your mother's cruel fate, had it not been too circumſtantially related in the newſpapers."

"I believe you," returned Thaddeus, drawing an agonizing ſigh, at the dreadful picture which the laſt ſentence recalled; "I believe you; though at the time of which I ſpeak, I thought otherwiſe; for, next day, both my letters were re-incloſed in a blank cover, directed as if by your hand, and brought by a ſervant, with a meſſage, that there was no anſwer."

"Powers

"Powers of Heaven!" exclaimed Somerſet, "there muſt be ſome villainy in this! — Deareſt Thaddeus!" cried he, breaking off abruptly, and graſping his hand, "I would have flown to you, had it been to meet death! But why did you not come in yourſelf? Who prevented you? Then no miſtake could have happened. Why did you not come in yourſelf?"

"Becauſe I was uncertain of your ſentiments; my firſt letter remained unnoticed; and my heart, dear Somerſet," added he, preſſing his hand, "would not ſtoop to ſolicitation."

"Solicitation!" exclaimed Pembroke with warmth, "you have a right to demand my life! But there is ſome raſcally buſineſs in this affair; nothing elſe could have carried it through: if any of my ſervants have dared to open theſe letters —Merciful Heaven," cried he, interrupting himſelf, "how you muſt have deſpiſed me!"

"I was afflicted," returned Thaddeus, "that the man whom my family ſo warmly loved, could prove ſo unworthy; and afterwards, whenever I met you in the ſtreets, which I think was once or twice, I confeſs, to paſs you, cut me to the heart."

"And you have met me!" exclaimed Pembroke, "and I not ſee you! I cannot comprehend it."

"Yes," anſwered Thaddeus, "and the firſt time was going into the playhouſe. I believe I called after you."

"It is now ten months ſince," returned Pembroke; "I remember very well, that ſomebody called out my name, while I was handing Lady Coningſby and her ſiſter into the porch. I looked about, and not ſeeing any one whom I knew, thought I muſt have been miſtaken. But why, dear Sobieſki, why did you not follow me into the theatre?"

Thaddeus ſhook his head, and ſmiling languidly; "My poverty would not permit me," replied he, "but I waited in the hall

hall, until every body left the houſe, in hopes of intercepting you as you paſſed."

Pembroke ſprung from his chair at theſe words, and, with the moſt vehement voice and action, exclaimed, "I ſee it! That raſcal Loftus is at the bottom of it! He followed me into the theatre; he muſt have ſeen you, and his curſed ſelfiſhneſs was alarmed. Yes, it muſt be he! He would not allow me to return that way; when I ſaid I would, he told me a thouſand lies about the carriages coming round, and, like a fool, I went out by another door."

"Who is Mr. Loftus?" inquired Thaddeus, ſurpriſed at his friend's ſuſpicion; "I do not know the man."

"What," returned Pembroke, walking about the room in a heat, "don't you remember, that Loftus is the name of the ſcoundrel, who perſuaded me to volunteer againſt Poland? to ſcreen his baſeneſs, I have brought all this upon myſelf."

"Now I recollect it," replied Thaddeus; "but I never ſaw him."

"Yet I am not leſs certain that I am right," replied Somerſet; "I will tell you my reaſons. After I quitted Villanow, you remember I met him at Dantzic. Before we left the port, he implored, almoſt on his knees, that in pity to his mother and ſiſters, whom he ſupported out of his ſalary, I would refrain from incenſing my parents againſt him, by relating any circumſtance of our viſit to Poland. The man ſhed tears as he ſpoke; and, like a fool, I conſented to keep the ſecret, till the vicar of Somerſet (a poor ſoul, ill of the dropſy) dies, and he be in poſſeſſion of the living. When we landed in England, I found that the cauſe of my ſudden recal was the illneſs of my dear mother. But Heaven denied me the happineſs of beholding her again: ſhe had been buried two days before I reached the ſhore." Pembroke pauſed a moment; and then reſumed—"For

near

near a month after my return, I could not quit my room; a fever seized me; but, on my recovery, I wrote both to you and to the Palatine. I repeated my letters, at least every six weeks, during the first year of our separation; yet you persisted in being silent. Hurt as I was at this neglect, I believed that gratitude demanded some sacrifices from pride, and I continued to write, even till the spring following. Meanwhile, the papers of the day teemed with Sobieski's actions, Sobieski's fame; and supposing that increasing glory had blotted me out of your memory, I resolved, thenceforth, to regard our friendship as a dream, and never to speak of it more."

Confounded at this double misapprehension, Thaddeus, with a glowing countenance, expressed his regret for having doubted his friend; and, repeating the assurance, of having been punctual to his promise of correspondence, even when he deemed him inconstant, acknowledged,

that nothing but a premeditated ſcheme could have effected ſo many diſappointments.

"Aye;" returned Pembroke, reddening with awakened anger; "I could ſwear that Mr. Loftus has all my letters in his bureau at this moment! No houſe ever gave a man a better opportunity to play the rogue in than our's. It is a cuſtom with us to lay our letters in a morning on the hall table, whence they are ſent to the office: and, in the ſame way, when the poſt arrives, they are ſpread out that their ſeveral owners may take them as they paſs to breakfaſt. From this management, I cannot doubt the means by which Mr. Loftus, under the hope of ſeparating us for ever, has intercepted every letter to you, and every letter from you. I ſuppoſe the wretch feared that I might repent my engagement, if our correſpondence were allowed. He trembled, leſt the buſineſs ſhould be blown before the vicar died, and in conſequence loſe both the expect-

ed

ed living, and his preſent ſituation about Lord Arun. A villain! for once he has judged rightly; I will unmaſk him to my father; and ſhew him what it is to purchaſe ſubſiſtence at the expence of honour and juſtice."

Thaddeus, who could not withhold immediate credit to theſe evidences of chicanery, tried to calm the violence of his friend; who only anſwered, by inſiſting on having his company back with him to Somerſet-Caſtle.

"I long to preſent you to my father;" cried Pembroke, "when I tell him who you are; of your kindneſs to me; how rejoiced will he be! How happy, how proud, to have you as his gueſt; to ſhew the warm gratitude of a Briton's heart! Indeed, Sobieſki, you will love him; for he is generous and noble, like your ineſtimable grandfather. Beſides," added he, ſmiling with a ſudden recollection, "there is my lovely couſin, Miſs Beaufort, who, I verily

verily believe, will actually fly into your arms!"

The blood rushed over the cheeks of Thaddeus at this speech of his friend, and, half suppressing a sigh, he shook his head.

"Don't look so like an infidel," resumed Somerset. "If you have any doubts of possessing her affections, I can put you out of your pain by a single sentence!—When Lady Dundas's household, with myself amongst them, (for little did I suspect, that I was joining the cry against my friend!) were asserting the most flagrant instances of your deceit to Euphemia, Mary, alone, withstood the whole tide of malice, and compelled me to release you."

"Gracious Providence!" cried Thaddeus, catching Pembroke's hand, and looking eagerly and with agitation in his face, "Was it you who came to my prison! Was it Miss Beaufort who visited my lodgings?"

"Indeed it was," returned his friend,

"and

"and I blush for myself, that I quitted Newgate without an interview. Had I followed the dictates of common decency, I should have seen you; and then, what pain would have been spared my dear cousin! What a joyful surprise would have awaited myself!"

Thaddeus could only reply by pressing his friend's hand. His brain whirled. He could not decide on the nature of his feelings; one moment he would have given worlds to throw himself at Miss Beaufort's feet, and the next, he trembled at the prospect of meeting her so soon.

"Dear Sobieski!" cried Pembroke, "how strangely you receive this intelligence! Is it possible that the love of Mary Beaufort can be rejected?"

"No," cried the Count, looking up, his fine face flushed with emotion; "I adore Miss Beaufort. Her virtues possess my whole heart. But can I forget that I have only that heart to offer? Can I forget that I am a beggar? That even

now, I exiſt on her bounty?". The eyes of Thaddeus, and the ſudden tremor which ſhook his frame, finiſhed this appeal to his fate.

Pembroke found it enter his ſoul. To hide its effect, he threw himſelf on his friend's breaſt, and exclaimed, "Do not injure me and my father by theſe ſentiments! You are come, deareſt Sobieſki, to a ſecond home. Sir Robert Somerſet will conſider himſelf ennobled in ſupplying the place of your lamented grandfather! —and my couſin Mary, as you love her, ſhall bind us ſtill cloſer; you muſt be my relation as well as my friend."

Thaddeus replied with animated acknowledgements of Pembroke's affection; —"But," added he, "I muſt not allow the generous ſpirit of my dear Somerſet to believe, that I can live a dependant on any power, but the Author of my being. I conſider nothing ſo degrading as an exiſtence waſted in idleneſs; therefore, if Sir Robert Somerſet will aſſiſt me to

procure

procure ſome honeſt means of acquiring ſupport, I ſhall thank him from my ſoul. In no other way, my kindeſt friend, can I ever be brought to tax the gratitude of your father."

Pembroke coloured at this, and exclaimed, in a voice of diſpleaſure, "Gracious Heaven, Sobieſki, what can you mean? Do you imagine, that ever my father or myſelf can forget, that you were little leſs than a prince in your own country? That when in ſuch a high ſtation, you treated me like a brother? That you preſerved me, even when I lifted my arm againſt your life? Can we be ſuch monſters as to forget all this? or think that we acted juſtly by you, in permitting you to labour for your bread? No, Thaddeus, my very ſoul ſpurns the idea. Your mother ſheltered me as a ſon; and I inſiſt, that you allow my father to perform the ſame part by you! Beſides, you ſhall not be idle; you may have a commiſſion in the army, and I will follow you."

The

The Count preſſed the hand of his friend, and looking gratefully in his face, ſhook his head, and replied, "Had I a hundred tongues, my generous Pembroke, I could not expreſs my ſenſe of your friendſhip; it is indeed a cordial to my heart; it imparts to me an earneſt of happineſs, which I thought had fled for ever; but it ſhall not allure me from my principles. I am reſolved not to live a life of indolence; and I am reſolved, at this period not to enter the Britiſh army. No," added he, emotion elevating his tone and manner, "rather would I toil for ſubſiſtence by the ſweat of my brow, than be ſubjected to the neceſſity of acting in concert with thoſe ravagers who deſtroyed my country! I cannot fight by the ſide of the Ruſſians! I cannot enliſt under their allies! I will not be led out to devaſtation! Mine was, and ever ſhall be, a defenſive ſword;—and, ſhould danger threaten England, I would be as ready to withſtand her enemies, as I ardently,

dently, though ineffectually, oppoſed thoſe of unhappy Poland."

Pembroke recognized the high-ſouled Thaddeus of Warſaw in this lofty burſt of enthuſiaſm; aware that his father's munificence, and manner of conferring eſteem and obligations, would go farther towards removing theſe ſcruples, than all his arguments, he did not attempt to combat a reſolution, which he knew that he could not ſubdue; but tried to prevail with him to become his gueſt, until ſomething could be arranged to ſuit his wiſhes.

Thaddeus conſented to accompany Somerſet to the caſtle, the day after that on which Sir Robert ſhould be appriſed of his coming. Pembroke perceived that the morning had ſurpriſed them; and ſhaking his friend warmly by the hand, bade him farewell: then, haſtening down the hill, he arrived at the lodge, juſt as the ſervants were opening the ſhutters.

Having given orders to the groom, whom he met in the paſſage, he wrote a

ſligh

ſlight apology to Shafto, for his abrupt departure; and, mounting his horſe, gallopped, full of delight, towards Somerſet Caſtle.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

NEXT morning, when the Counteſs and Thaddeus were ſeated at breakfaſt, ſhe expreſſed ſurpriſe and pleaſure, at the ſcene which ſhe had witneſſed on the preceding night; at the ſame time intimating ſome mortification, that he had withheld any part of his confidence from her. Sobieſki ſoon obtained her ladyſhip's pardon, by relating the manner of his firſt meeting with Mr. Somerſet, and the conſequent events of that momentous period.

Lady Tynemouth wept over the diſtreſſful fate, that marked the reſidue of his narrative, with a tenderneſs which endeared her to his ſoul. But when, in compliance with his inquiries, ſhe informed him how it happened that ſhe was at

Harrowby

Harrowby Abbey, when he ſuppoſed her to be on the Wolds; it was his turn to pity; and to ſhudder at his conſanguinity with Lord Harwold.

"Indeed," added the Counteſs, "you muſt have had a moſt tedious journey from Harwold Park to Harrowby; and nothing but my pleaſure could exceed my aſtoniſhment, when I met you laſt night on the hill."

Thaddeus declared, that travelling a few miles farther than he intended, was no fatigue to him; yet were it otherwiſe, the happineſs which he then enjoyed, would have acted as a panacea for worſe ills, could he have ſeen her ladyſhip looking as well as when ſhe left London.

Lady Tynemouth ſmiled. "You are very right, Sobieſki; I am worſe than when I was in town. My ſolitary journey to Harwold, haraſſed me much; and when my ſon ſent me orders to leave it, becauſe his father wanted the place for the autumnal months, I was labouring under

under a ſevere cold, which I caught in travelling. Nevertheleſs I obeyed him, and, in great diſtreſs of heart, arrived here laſt week. How kind you were to follow me! Who informed you of the place of my deſtination; hardly any of Lady Sophia's houſehold?"

"No," returned Thaddeus, "I luckily had the precaution to inquire at the inn where the coach ſtopped, what part of Lord Tynemouth's family were at the Park; and when I heard, that the Earl himſelf was there, my next queſtion was, where then is the Counteſs? The landlord very civilly told me of your having engaged a carriage from his houſe a day or two before, to carry you to one of his Lordſhip's ſeats, within a few miles of Somerſet Caſtle. Hence, from what I had heard you ſay of the ſituation of Harrowby, I concluded that it muſt be the abbey; and ſo I ſought you at a venture."

"And I hope that a happy iſſue" replied ſhe "will ariſe from your wanderings!

ings! This rencontre, with so old a friend as Mr. Somerset, is a pleasing omen. For my part, I was ignorant of the arrival of the family at the castle until yesterday morning, when I sent off a messenger to apprise my dear Miss Beaufort, that I was in her neighbourhood. To my great dissatisfaction, Lady Shafto found me out immediately; and when, in compliance with her teizing invitation, I walked down, to sit an hour with her last night, little did I expect that I should meet with the amiable cousin of our sweet friend. So delightful an accident, has amply repaid me for the pain that I endured, in seeing Miss Dundas in her ladyship's house: an insolent and reproachful letter, which she wrote to me on your account, has rendered her an object of my most decided dislike."

Thaddeus smiled and bowed, "Since my dear Lady Tynemouth, her groundless malice, and Miss Euphemia's folly, have failed, in estranging, either your confidence,

or

or the eſteem of Miſs Beaufort, from me, I deſpiſe and pardon them both. Perhaps I ought to pity them; for is it not difficult, to paſs through the enchantments of wealth and adulation, and emerge as pure as when we entered them? Unclouded fortune is, indeed, a trial of ſpirits; and how brightly does Miſs Beaufort riſe from the blaze! Surrounded by ſplendour, homage, and indulgence, ſhe is yet all nature, gentleneſs, and virtue!"

The Counteſs who wiſhed to appear cheerful, rallied him on the warmth of his expreſſions; then riſing from her ſeat, ſhe left him to his meditations, and retired to dreſs.

The family of Somerſet were juſt drawn round the breakfaſt table, when Pembroke arrived. During the repaſt, they expreſſed their ſurpriſe at the ſuddenneſs of his return. Miſs Beaufort, after repeating the contents of the note, which ſhe had received the preceding day from Lady Tinemouth,

requeſted that her couſin would be kind enough to drive her in his curricle that morning to Harrowby.

"I will, with pleaſure," anſwered he. "I have ſeen her ladyſhip, and even ſupped with her laſt night."

"How came that?" aſked Mrs. Dorothy.

"I ſhall explain it to my father, whenever he will honour me with an audience," returned he, addreſſing the baronet, with all the joy of his heart looking out at his eyes; "will you indulge me, dear ſir, by half an hour's attention, any time before noon?"

"Certainly," replied Sir Robert; "at preſent I am going into my ſtudy, where I muſt ſettle my ſteward's books; but the moment I have finiſhed, I will ſend for you."

Mrs. Dorothy walked out after her brother, to attend on her aviary; and Miſs Beaufort remaining alone with her couſin, made ſome enquiries about the Counteſs's reaſons for coming to the abbey.

"I know

"I know nothing about them," replied he, gaily, "for she went to bed almost the instant I entered the house. Too good to remain where her company was not wanted, she left me to enjoy a most delightful *tete-a-tete* with a dear friend, from whom I parted four years ago. In short, we sat up the whole night together, talking over past scenes,—and present ones too, for I assure you, you were not forgotten."

"I! what had I to do with it?" replied Mary, smiling; "I cannot recollect any friend of yours, whom you have not seen these four years."

"Well, that is strange!" answered Pembroke, "he remembers you perfectly: but true to your sex, you affirm what you please, tho' I know that there is not a man in the world whom you prefer before him."

Miss Beaufort shook her head, laughed, and sighed; and withdrawing her hand

from his, threatened to leave him, if he would not be ſerious.

"I am ſerious," cried he, pulling her back to her chair: "Would you have me *ſwear* that I have ſeen him whom you moſt wiſh to ſee?"

She regarded the expreſſion of his countenance with a momentary emotion; and, taking her ſeat again, "You can have ſeen no man," ſaid ſhe, "that is of conſequence to me; ſo, whoever your friend may be, I have only to congratulate you on a meeting, which affords you ſuch delight."

Pembroke burſt into a laugh at her compoſure. "So cold," cried he, "ſo cautious! Yet I verily believe that you would participate my pleaſure, ſhould I tell you who he is. However you are ſuch a ſceptic, that I won't hint even one of the many fine things that he ſaid of you.

She ſmiled incredulouſly.

"I could beat you, couſin," exclaimed he,

he, "for this oblique way of saying that I am telling lies! But I will have my revenge on your curiosity, for, on my honour, I declare," added he emphatically, "that last night, I met with a friend at Lady Tinemouth's, who four years ago saved my life; who entertained me several weeks in his house; and who has seen, and adores you! 'Tis true, on my hopes of heaven; and I have promised that you will repay these weighty obligations by marrying him. What do you say to this, my sweet Mary?"

Miss Beaufort looked anxious at the serious and energetic manner in which he made these assertions; even the sportive kiss that ended the question, did not dispel the gravity, with which she prepared to reply.

Pembroke perceiving her intent, prevented her, by exclaiming, "Cease, Mary, cease! I see you are a going to make a false statement. Let truth prevail, and you will not deny, that I am suing for a

plighted faith? You will not deny who it was that ſoftened and ſubdued your heart? You cannot conceal from me, that the wanderer Conſtantine poſſeſſes your affections?

She reddened with pain and diſpleaſure; and riſing from her ſeat, "I did not expect this cruel, this ungenerous ſpeech from you, Pembroke!" cried ſhe, averting her tearful eyes; "What have I done to deſerve ſo rude, ſo unfeeling a reproach?"

Pembroke threw his arm round her waiſt. "Come," ſaid he, in a tender voice, "don't be tragical. I never meant to reproach you, child: I dare ſay, if you gave your heart, it was only in return for his. I know you are a grateful girl; and, I verily believe, that you won't find much difference between my friend, the young Count Sobieſki, and the forlorn Conſtantine."

A ſuſpicion of the truth flaſhed acroſs Miſs Beaufort's mind: unable to ſpeak, ſhe

ſhe caught hold of her couſin's hands, and looking eagerly in his face, her eyes declared the queſtion that ſhe would have aſked.

Pembroke laughed triumphantly; but a ſervant entering, to tell him that Sir Robert was ready, he ſtrained her to his breaſt, and exclaimed, "now I am revenged! Farewell! I leave you to all the pangs of doubt and curioſity!" He then flew out of the room, with an arch glance at her diſtreſſed countenance, and hurried up ſtairs.

She claſped her trembling hands together, as the door cloſed on Pembroke. "O Gracious Providence!" cried ſhe; "What am I to underſtand by this myſtery, this joy of my couſin's? Can it be poſſible, that the illuſtrious Sobieſki, and my contemned Conſtantine, are the ſame perſons?" A burning bluſh overſpread her face and boſom, at the expreſſion *my* which had eſcaped her lips.

Whilſt the graces, the ſweetneſs, the dignity of Thaddeus, captivated her notice; his ſufferings, his virtues, and the myſterious intereſt which involved his hiſtory fixed her attention, and awakened her eſteem. From theſe grounds the ſtep is ſhort to love. 'When the mind is conquered, the heart ſurrenders at diſcretion.' But ſhe knew not, that ſhe had advanced too far to retreat, until the laſt ſcene at Dundas-houſe, by forcing her to defend Conſtantine againſt the charge of loving her, made her confeſs, how much ſhe wiſhed that the charge were true.

Poor and lowly as he ſeemed, ſhe found that her whole heart and life were wrapped in his remembrance; that his worſhipped idea was her moſt precious ſolace; her property, the dear treaſure which was her ſecret and ſupreme felicity. It was the companion of her walks, the monitor of her actions. Whenever ſhe planned, whenever ſhe executed, ſhe aſked herſelf,

herself, How would Constantine consider this; and accordingly did she approve or condemn her conduct.

Though separated far from this idol of her memory, thus was the impression, which he had stamped on her heart, ever present. The shade of Laura visited the solitude of Vaucluse; the image of Constantine haunted the vaults of Somerset. The loveliness of nature; its leafy groves, and verdant meadows; its blooming mornings, and luxurious sun-sets; the romantic shadows of twilight, or the soft glories of the moon and stars; as they prefsed beauty and sentiment upon her heart, awoke it to the remembrance of Constantine: she saw his image, she felt his soul, in every object. Subtile and undefinable is that ethereal chord, which unites our tenderest thoughts with their chain of association!

Before this conversation, in which Pembroke mentioned the name of Constantine, with such badinage and ambiguity, he

never heard him ſpoken of by Mary or his aunt, without declaring a diſpleaſure nearly amounting to anger. Hence, when he now ſo ſtrangely altered his tone, Miſs Beaufort neceſſarily concluded that he had ſeen in the perſon of him ſhe moſt valued, ſome one whom he loved. Before this time, ſhe more than once ſuſpected, from the opinions which Somerſet occaſionally repeated reſpecting the affairs of Poland, that he could only have acquired ſo accurate a knowledge of its events, by having viſited the country itſelf. She mentioned her ſuſpicion to Mr. Loftus: he denied the fact; and ſhe thought no more on the ſubject, until the preſent ambiguous hints of her couſin, conjured up theſe doubts anew; and led her to ſuppoſe, that if Pembroke had not diſobeyed his father ſo far as to go to Warſaw, he muſt have met with the Count Sobieſki in ſome other realm. The poſſibility that this young hero, of whom fame ſpoke ſo loudly, might be the myſte-

rious Conſtantine, bewildered and delighted her. The more ſhe compared what ſhe had heard of the one, with what ſhe witneſſed in the other, the more was ſhe reconciled to the probability of her ardent hope. Beſides, ſhe could not for a moment believe, that her couſin would ſo cruelly ſport with her delicacy and peace, as to excite expectations, which he could not fulfil.

Agitated by a ſuſpence, which bordered on agony, with a beating heart ſhe heard his quick ſtep deſcending the ſtairs. The door opened, and Pembroke, flying into the room, caught up his hat: as he was darting away again, Miſs Beaufort, unable to reſtrain her impatience, with an imploring voice ejaculated his name. He turned round, and diſplayed to her amazed ſight a countenance in which no veſtige of his former animation could be traced; his cheek was fluſhed; and his eyes full of diſtraction, ſhot a wild fire that ſtruck to her heart. Unconſcious what ſhe did,

she ran up to him; but Pembroke pushing her back, exclaimed, "Don't ask me any questions, if you would not drive me to madness."

"O Heaven!" cried she, catching his arm and clinging to him, while the eagerness of his motion dragged her into the hall; "tell me! Has any thing happened to my guardian? to your friend? to Constantine?"

"No;" replied he, looking at her with a face full of desperation; "but my father commands me to treat him like a villain."

She could hardly credit her senses, at this confirmation, that Constantine and Sobieski were one: turning giddy with the tumultuous delight that rushed over her soul, she staggered back a few paces, and, leaning against the open door, tried to recover breath to regain the room she had left.

Pembroke having escaped from her grasp, ran furiously down the hill, mounted his

his horſe, and, forbidding any groom to attend him, galloped towards the high road with the impetuoſity of a madman. All the powers of his ſoul were in arms. Wounded, diſhonoured, ſtigmatiſed with ingratitude and baſeneſs, he believed himſelf to be the moſt degraded of men.

Sir Robert Somerſet, founded a hatred of the Poles and Hungarians, on the recollection of an injury which he received, in early youth, from ſome of thoſe people. In this inſtance, his diſlike was implacable; and when his ſon ſet out for the continent, he poſitively forbade him to enter either Poland or Hungary. Nevertheleſs, when Pembroke joined the Baronet in his library, he did it with confidence. With a bounding heart, and animated countenance, he recapitulated, how he had been wrought upon by the Ruſſian noblemen, to take up arms in their cauſe, and march into Poland. At theſe laſt words the brow of his father contracted.

Pembroke,

Pembroke, who expected ſome marks of diſpleaſure, haſtened to obliterate his diſobedience, by narrating the event which introduced, not only the young Count Sobieſki to his ſuccour, but the conſequent friendſhip of the whole of that princely family.

Sir Robert made no reply to this, than by a deeper frown; and, when Pembroke, with all the ardour of grief, attempted to deſcribe the calamitous death of the Palatine, the horrors which attended the laſt hours of the Counteſs, and the ſucceeding miſery of Thaddeus, who was now in England, no language can paint the rage which at once burſt from the Baronet. He ſtamped on the ground, he covered his face with his clenched hands; then turning on his ſon with the moſt tremendous fury, he exclaimed, "Pembroke! You have outraged my commands! And never will I pardon you, if this young man ever blaſt me with his ſight."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Pembroke, thunder-

thunder-ſtruck at a violence, which he almoſt wiſhed might proceed from any cauſe but intention; "Surely ſomething has agitated my father! What has diſcompoſed you, Sir?"

Sir Robert ſhook his head, whilſt his teeth ground againſt each other, "Don't miſtake me," replied he in a firm voice; "I am perfectly in my ſenſes. It depends on *you* that I ſhall continue ſo. You know my oath againſt thoſe accurſed Polanders; and, I repeat again, if you ever bring that young man into my preſence, you ſhall never ſee *me* more."

A cold dew overſpread the body of Pembroke. He would have caught hold of his father's hand, but he held it back. "O, Sir!" ſaid he, "you ſurely cannot intend, that I ſhall treat with ingratitude, the man who ſaved my life?"

Sir Robert did not vouchſafe him an anſwer, but continued walking up and down the room, until his agitation increaſing at every ſtep, he opened the

door

door of an interior apartment, and retired, bidding his ſon remain.

The horror-ſtruck Pembroke, waited for near a quarter of an hour, before his father re-entered. When he did appear, the deep gloom of his eye gave no encouragement to his ſon, who, hanging down his head, recoiled from ſpeaking firſt. Sir Robert approached with a compoſed but ſevere countenance, and ſaid, "I have been ſeeking every palliation that your conduct will admit, but I can find none. Before you quitted England, you knew well my abhorrence of the Poliſh nation. One of that country, many years ago, wounded my happineſs in a way I ſhall never recover. From that hour I took an oath, never to enter its borders; and never to ſuffer one of its people to come within my doors. Raſh, diſobedient boy! You know my diſpoſition, and you have ſeen the emotion with which this dilemma has ſhaken my ſoul! But be it on your head! you have incurred

incurred obligations which I cannot repay. I will not perjure myself, to defray a debt contracted against my positive and declared principles. I never will see this Polander you speak of; and, it is my express command, on pain of my eternal malediction, that you break with him entirely."

Pembroke with the most agitated feelings, fell into a seat. Sir Robert proceeded.

"I pity your distress, Pembroke, but my resolution cannot be shaken. Oaths are not to be broken with impunity. You must either resign him or resign me. We may compromise your debt of gratitude; I will give you deeds to put your friend in possession of five hundred pounds a year for life, for ever, but, from the hour in which you tell him so, you must see him no more."

Sir Robert was preparing to quit the room; when Pembroke, starting from his chair, threw himself in agony on his knees, and catching by the skirt of his coat, implored him for God's sake, to recall his words;

words; to remember, that he was affixing everlaſting diſhonour on his ſon! "Remember, dear ſir!" cried he, holding his ſtruggling hand, "that the man, to whom you offer money as a compenſation for inſult, is of a nature too noble to receive it. He will reject it, and ſpurn me; and I ſhall know that I deſerve his ſcorn. For mercy's ſake, ſpare me the agony of harrowing up the heart of my preſerver; of meeting reproach from his eyes!"

"Leave me!" cried the Baronet, breaking from him; "I repeat, unleſs you wiſh to incur my curſe, do as I have commanded."

Thus outraged, thus agoniſed, Pembroke had appeared before the eyes of his couſin Mary, more like a diſtracted creature, than a man poſſeſſed of his ſenſes. Shortly after his abrupt departure, her apprehenſion was petrified to a dreadful certainty of ſome cruel ruin to her hopes, by an order, which ſhe received in the hand-writing of her uncle, commanding her

her not to attempt viſiting Lady Tinemouth, whilſt the Count Sobieſki continued to be her gueſt.

Hardly knowing whither he went, Pembroke did not arrive at the ruined aiſle, which leads to the habitable part of the Abbey, until near three o'clock. He inquired of the ſervant who took his horſe, whether the Counteſs and Mr. Conſtantine were at home. The man replied in the affirmative; but added with a ſad countenance, that he feared neither of them could be ſeen.

"For what reaſon?" demanded Somerſet.

"Alas! ſir," replied the ſervant, "this day at noon, while my lady was dreſſing, ſhe was ſeized with a violent fit of coughing, which ended in the rupture of a blood veſſel. It continued to flow ſo long, that Mr. Conſtantine told the apothecary, whom he had ſummoned, to ſend for a phyſician. The Doctor is not yet arrived, and Mr. Conſtantine won't leave my lady."

Though

Though Mr. Somerſet was truly concerned at the illneſs of the Counteſs, the reſpite it afforded him, from immediately declaring the ungrateful meſſage of Sir Robert, gave him no inconſiderable degree of eaſe. Some little relieved by the hope of being for one day ſpared the anguiſh of diſplaying his father in a diſgraceful light, he entered the Abbey, and commiſſioned a maid-ſervant to inform Thaddeus that he was below.

In a few minutes the girl returned with the following lines, ſcrawled on a piece of paper.

"I am grieved that I cannot ſee my dear Somerſet to-day? I fear that my revered friend is on her death-bed. I have ſent for Dr. Cavendiſh, who is now at Stamford; doubtleſs you know he is a man of the firſt abilities; if human ſkill could preſerve her, I might yet have hopes; but her diſorder is a conſumption, and its ſtroke is ſure. I am now ſitting by

her

her bed-ſide, and writing what ſhe dictates to her huſband, her ſon, and her daughter: painful, you may believe, is the taſk! I cannot, my dear Somerſet, add more, than my hope of ſeeing you ſoon; and that you will join in prayers to Heaven for the reſtoration of my inеſtimable friend, with your faithful

"SOBIESKI."

"Alas! unhappy, perſecuted Sobieſki!" thought Pembroke, as he cloſed the paper; "To what art thou doomed! Some friends are torn from thee by death; others deſert thee in the hour of trouble!"

He took out his pencil to anſwer this diſtreſſing epiſtle, but he ſtopped at the firſt word; he durſt not write, that his father would fulfil any one of thoſe engagements, which he had ſo largely promiſed; and, throwing away the pencil and the paper, he left a verbal declaration of his ſorrow at what had happened, and an aſſurance of calling next day. Turning his

his back on a houſe, which he had left in the morning, with ſuch animating hopes, he remounted his horſe, and, melancholy and ſlow, rode about the country until evening; ſo unwilling was he to return to that home, which now threatened him with the frowns of his father, the tears of Mary Beaufort, and the miſerable reflections of his own wretched heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

DOCTOR Cavendiſh not having quitted his friend at Stamford, ſet off for Harrowby the inſtant Mr. Conſtantine's meſſenger arrived; and before midnight alighted at the Abbey.

When he entered Lady Tinemouth's chamber, he found her ſupported in the arms of Thaddeus, and ſtruggling with a ſecond rupture of her lungs, which ſeemed to threaten immediate diſſolution. As he approached the bed, Thaddeus turned his eyes on him, with an expreſſion that powerfully told his fears. Dr. Cavendiſh ſilently preſſed his hand; then taking from his pocket ſome ſtyptic drops, which he brought on purpoſe, he made the Counteſs ſwallow them, and ſoon ſaw that they ſucceeded in ſtopping the blood.

Thaddeus

Thaddeus and his friend remained by the ſide of the ſuffering Lady Tinemouth, until ten in the morning, when ſhe ſunk into a gentle ſleep. Complete ſtillneſs being neceſſary to continue this repoſe, the Doctor propoſed leaving a maid to watch by her ladyſhip; and drawing the Count out of the room, deſcended the ſtairs.

Mr. Somerſet, who had been arrived half an hour, met them in the breakfaſt parlour. After a few kind words exchanged between the parties, they ſat down with dejected countenances, to their melancholy meal. Thaddeus was too much abſorbed in the ſcene that he had left, to take any thing but a diſh of coffee.

"Do you think Lady Tinemouth is in imminent danger?" inquired Pembroke of the Doctor.

Dr. Cavendiſh ſighed and turning to Thaddeus, directed to him the anſwer, which his friend's queſtion demanded. "I

afraid, my dear Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid he, in a reluctant voice, "that you are to ſuſtain a new trial! I fear her Ladyſhip cannot live eight-and-forty hours."

Thaddeus threw down his eyes, and ſhuddered, but made no reply. Further remarks were prevented by a meſſenger from the Counteſs, who deſired Mr. Conſtantine's immediate attendance at her bedſide. He obeyed. In half an hour he returned, with the tears yet wet on his cheek.

"Dear Thaddeus!" cried Pembroke, riſing and taking his hand, "I truſt that the Counteſs is not worſe? This emotion of your's is too diſtreſſing: it afflicts my very heart." Indeed it rent it; for Pembroke could not help internally acknowledging, that when Sobieſki ſhould cloſe the eyes of Lady Tinemouth, he would be paying the laſt ſad office to his laſt friend. That dear diſtinction, he durſt no longer arrogate to himſelf. Denied the fulfilment of its duties, he thought, that to retain

the title would be an aſſumption without a right.

Thaddeus drew his hand over his again overflowing eyes; "The Counteſs herſelf," ſaid he, "feels the truth of what Dr. Cavendiſh told us. She ſent for me, to beg, that, as I loved her, or would wiſh to ſee her die in peace, to deviſe ſome means of bringing her daughter to the Abbey to-night. As for Lord Harwold, ſhe ſays, his behaviour, ſince he arrived at manhood, has been of a nature ſo cruel and unnatural, that ſhe would not draw on herſelf the miſery, or he the added guilt, of a refuſal: But with regard to Lady Albina, who has been quieſcent in all their barbarities, ſhe truſts, that ſhe might be prevailed on to ſeek a laſt embrace from a dying parent. It is this requeſt," continued he, "that agitates me. When ſhe pictured to me, with all the fervour of a mother, her doating fondneſs for this daughter, (on whom, whenever ſhe did venture to hope, all her fairy dreams reſted;) when ſhe wrung my

my hands, and beſeeched me, as if I had been the ſole diſpoſer of her fate, to let her ſee her child before ſhe died; I could only promiſe every exertion to effect it; and, with an aching heart, I came to conſult you."

Dr. Cavendiſh was opening his lips to ſpeak, but Somerſet in his eagerneſs to relieve his friend, did not perceive it, and immediately anſwered: "I will undertake this very hour, what you have promiſed. I know that Lord Tinemouth's family are now at the Wold. It is only thirty miles diſtant, I will ſend a ſervant, to have relays of horſes ready. My curricle, which is at the door, will be more convenient than a chaiſe; and I will engage to be back before to-morrow morning. Write a letter, Thaddeus," added he, "to Lady Albina; tell her of her mother's ſituation; and, though I never have ſeen her ladyſhip, I will give it into her own hand; and carry her off directly, even were it in the face of her villainous father."

The pale cheeks of Sobieſki, were flushed with a momentary hectic; turning to Dr. Cavendiſh, he begged him to write, whilſt he walked out with his friend to order the carriage. Pembroke was thanked for his zeal, but it was not by words; they are too weak vehicles to convey ſtrong impreſſions; Thaddeus preſſed his hand, and accompanied the action with a look, which ſpoke volumes. The withered heart of Pembroke, expanded under the animating gratitude of his friend: he ſprung into his ſeat, and forgot, until he loſt ſight of Harrowby Hill, how ſoon he muſt appear to that friend, as the moſt ungrateful of men.

It was near four in the afternoon, before Mr. Somerſet left his curricle, at the little inn, which ſkirts the village of Harthorpe. The paling belonging to Lord Tinemouth's park, was only a few yards diſtant; but, fearful of being obſerved, Pembroke fought a more obſcure part; and, ſcaling a wall, which was covered by the branches of high trees, he found his way

to

to the houſe, through an almoſt impaſſible thicket.

He watched two hours, for the appearance of Lady Albina, (whoſe youth and elegance, he thought, would unequivocally diſtinguiſh her from the reſt of the Earl's houſehold,) but in vain. Deſponding of ſucceſs, he was preparing to change his ſtation, when he heard a ſound among the dry leaves, and the next moment, a beautiful young creature paſſed the buſh, behind which he was concealed. The fine ſymmetry of her profile, aſſured him that ſhe muſt be the daughter of Lady Tinemouth. She ſtooped to gather a china-aſter: Pembroke, knowing that no time ſhould be loſt, gently emerged from his receſs; but not in ſo quiet a manner as to eſcape the ear of Lady Albina, who inſtantly looking round, ſcreamed, and would have fled, had he not thrown himſelf before her, and exclaimed, "Stay, Lady Albina! For Heaven's ſake, ſtay! I come from your mother!"

Her Ladyſhip gazed fearfully in his face, and tried to releaſe her hand, which he had ſeized to prevent her flight.

"Do not be alarmed," continued he; "no harm is intended you. I am the ſon of Sir Robert Somerſet; and the friend of your mother, who is now on the point of death. She implores to ſee you this night, (for ſhe has hardly an hour to live,) to hear from your own lips, that you do not hate her."

Lady Albina, now wholly given up to his relation, trembled dreadfully; and, with faded cheeks, and quivering lips, replied, "Hate my mother! O, no! I have ever dearly loved her!"

A flood of tears prevented her ſpeaking further; and Pembroke perceiving that he had gained her confidence, put the Doctor's letter into her hand. The gentle heart of Lady Albina bled at every word, which her almoſt blinded eyes read over; turning to Pembroke, who ſtood contemplating her lovely countenance with the deepeſt

deepeſt intereſt, ſhe ſaid, "Pray, Mr. Somerſet, take me, now, to my mother. Were ſhe to die before I arrive, I ſhould be miſerable for life. Alas! alas! I have never been allowed to behold her! Never been allowed to viſit London, becauſe my father knew that I believed my poor mother innocent, and would have ſeen her, had it been poſſible."

Lady Albina wept violently as ſhe ſpoke, and giving her hand to Pembroke, timidly looked round, towards the houſe, and added, "You muſt take me this inſtant. We muſt haſten away, in caſe we ſhould be ſurpriſed. If Lady Sophia were to know that I have been ſpeaking with any body out of the family, I ſhould be locked up for months."

Pembroke did not require a ſecond command, from his beautiful charge; but conducting her through the unfrequented paths by which he had entered, ſeated her in his curricle; and whipping his horſes,

ſet off, full gallop, towards the melancholy goal of his enterprize.

The tender Lady Albina, (whoſe ingenuous mind had ever been proof againſt the malicious inſinuations of Lady Sophia to the prejudice of Lady Tinemouth,) ſat by the ſide of Mr. Somerſet, ſometimes mute with ſorrow; ſometimes lamenting, with all the artleſs eloquence of nature, the injuries of her dying parent, and her own unhappineſs, in having been ſo long withheld from paying duty, where ſhe owed ſo much affection.

Whilſt theſe two anxious travellers were purſuing their ſad journey, the inhabitants of the Abbey, were diſtracted with apprehenſion, that the Counteſs would expire before their arrival. Ever ſince Lady Tinemouth received information that Mr. Somerſet was gone to the Wold, hope and fear, agitated her almoſt to ſuffocation; at length, wearied out with ſolicitude and expectation, ſhe turned her dim eyes upon Thaddeus, and ſaid,

ſaid, in a languid voice, "My dear friend, it muſt be near midnight. I ſhall never ſee the morning; I ſhall never in this world ſee my child. I pray you, thank Mr. Somerſet for all the trouble I have occaſioned; and my daughter, my Albina!" added her ladyſhip, hardly able to articulate. "Oh! Father of mercies!" cried ſhe, holding up her claſped hands, "pour all thy bleſſings upon her head! ſhe never wilfully gave this broken heart a pang!"

The Counteſs had hardly ended ſpeaking, when Thaddeus heard a buſtle on the ſtairs; ſuſpecting that it might be the arrival of his friend, he made a ſign to Dr. Cavendiſh to go and inquire. His heart beat violently, whilſt he kept his eye fixed on the door, and held the fainting pulſe of Lady Tinemouth in his hand. The Doctor re-entered, and, in a low voice, whiſpered, "Lady Albina is here."

The words acted like magic on the fading ſenſes of the Counteſs; with pre-

ternatural ſtrength ſhe ſtarted from her pillow, and catching hold of Sobieſki's arm with both her's, cried, "O! give her to me whilſt I have life."

Lady Albina appeared, led in by Pembroke, but inſtantly quitting his hand, with an agonizing ſhriek ſhe ruſhed towards the bed, and flung herſelf into the extended arms of her mother. Thoſe arms cloſed on her, and the head of the Counteſs reſted on her boſom.

Dr. Cavendiſh perceived, by the ſtruggles of the young lady, that ſhe was in convulſions; and taking her off the bed, he conſigned her to Pembroke and Thaddeus, who carried her into another apartment: he remained to aſſiſt the Counteſs.

Albina was removed; but the eyes of her amiable and injured mother, were never again uncloſed: ſhe had breathed her laſt ſigh, in grateful extacy, on the boſom of her daughter; and Heaven had taken her ſpotleſs ſoul to itſelf.

Being convinced that the Counteſs was

indeed no more, the good Doctor left her remains in charge with the women; and repairing to the adjoining room, found Lady Albina yet ſenſeleſs, in the arms of his two friends. She was laid on a ſofa, and Cavendiſh was pouring ſome drops into her mouth, when he deſcried Thaddeus gliding ſoftly out of the room: deſirous to ſpare him the ſhock of ſuddenly ſeeing the corpſe of one whom he loved ſo dearly, he ſaid, "Stop, Mr. Conſtantine! I conjure you, do not go into the Counteſs's room!"

The eyes of Thaddeus turned with quickneſs on the diſtreſſed face of the phyſician; one glance explained what the Doctor durſt not ſpeak; and haſtily ſaying, "I ſhall obey you," he hurried from the chamber.

In the Count's rapid deſcent from Lady Albina's room to the breakfaſt parlour, he too plainly perceived, by the tears of the ſervants, that he had now another ſorrow to add to his accumulated load.

He darted from the clamorous laments of theſe honeſt people, into the parlour, and ſhutting the door, threw himſelf on a ſopha; but reſt induced thought, and thought harrowed up his ſoul. He ſtarted from his poſition; he paced the room in a paroxyſm of anguiſh; he would have given worlds for one tear to relieve his oppreſſed heart. Ready to ſuffocate, he threw open a window and leaned out. Not a ſtar was viſible to light the darkneſs; the wind blew freſhly; and, with parched lips, he inhaled it, as the reviving breath of heaven.

He was ſitting on the window-ſeat, with his head leaning againſt the caſement, when Pembroke entered unobſerved: walking up to him, he laid his hand upon his arm, and ejaculated in a tremulous voice, "Thaddeus, dear Thaddeus!"

Thaddeus roſe at the well-known ſounds; they reminded him, that he was not yet alone in the world; and throwing himſelf upon the boſom of Mr. Somerſet, he exclaimed

claimed; "Heaven has ſtill reſerved thee, my dear Pembroke, to be my comforter! In thy friendſhip," added he, wiping away the tears which relieved his burſting heart; "I ſhall find an affection, ſimilar with theſe which are gone for ever: my friend, my brother! you are the laſt cord that binds me to the world."

Pembroke received the embrace of his friend; he felt his tears upon his cheek; but he could neither return the one, nor ſympathize with the other. The conviction, that he was ſoon to ſever that cord, which bound them to each other; that he was to cut aſunder that knot, which ought to have united them for ever; that he was to deprive the man who had preſerved his life, of the only ſtay of his exiſtence, and abandon him at once to deſpair! all theſe ideas ſtruck to his ſoul; and, graſping the hand of his friend, he gazed at his averted and dejected features, with a look of deſperate horror. "Sobieſki," cried he, "whatever may happen, never forget, that

that I ſwear, that I love you dearer than my life! And when I am forced to abandon my friend, I ſhall not be long abandoning what will then be worthleſs to me."

Not perceiving the phrenzy of eye which accompanied this energetic declaration, Thaddeus gave no other meaning to the words, than the belief, that it was the moſt expreſſive aſſurance of affection, which the forceful nature of his friend could deviſe.

The entrance of Dr. Cavendiſh diſturbed the two young men; to whom he communicated with concern the increaſed indiſpoſition of Lady Albina.

"The ſhock," ſaid he, "which ſhe received from the meeting, and death of her mother, has ſo materially ſhaken her delicate frame, that I have ordered her to bed, and adminiſtered an opiate, which I hope will procure her ſome repoſe:—and you my dear Sir," added he, addreſſing the Count, "you had better ſeek a little

little reſt! The ſtouteſt conſtitution might ſink under what you have lately endured. Pray allow Mr. Somerſet and myſelf to prevail with you, on our accounts, if not on your own, to retire for half an hour!"

Thaddeus in diſregard of his perſonal comfort, never infringed on that of others; he felt that he could not ſleep, but he knew it would gratify his benevolent friends to ſuppoſe that he did; and accordingly, without oppoſition, he went to a room, and throwing himſelf on a bed, lay for near an hour, ruminating on all that had paſſed.

There is an omnipreſence in thought, or a celerity producing nearly the ſame effect, which brings within the ſhort ſpace of a few minutes, the images of many foregoing years. In almoſt the ſame moment, Thaddeus reflected on his ſtrange meeting with the Counteſs; her melancholy ſtory; her forlorn death-bed; the fatal ſecret, that her vile huſband and ſon were

were his father and brother; and that her daughter, whom his warm heart acknowledged as a ſiſter, was with him under the ſame roof, and like him, the innocent inheritor of her father's ſhame.

Whilſt theſe multifarious and painful meditations were agitating his perturbed mind, Dr. Cavendiſh found repoſe on a couch; and Pembroke Somerſet, every inſtant conceiving greater abhorrence to his ungrateful taſk, reſolved once more to try the influence of entreaty, on the hitherto generous ſpirit of his father. With mingled hope and deſpondence, he commenced this laſt attempt, to ſhake, if poſſible, ſo fatal a reſolution:

"*To Sir Robert Somerſet, Bart.*
"*Somerſet Caſtle.*

"I have not ventured into the preſence of my dear father, ſince he uttered thoſe dreadful words, which I could give up my exiſtence to believe, I had never heard.

heard. You denounced a curſe upon me, if I oppoſed your will, to have me break all connexion with the man who preſerved my life. When I think on this; when I remember, that it was from *you* I received a command ſo inexplicable in yourſelf; ſo diſgraceful to me; I am almoſt mad:—and what I ſhall be, ſhould you, by repeating your injunctions, force me to obey them, Heaven only knows! but I am certain that I cannot ſurvive the loſs of my honour; I cannot ſurvive the ſacrifice of all my principles of virtue; which ſuch conduct muſt for ever deſtroy.

"O, my father! I conjure you! reflect, before, in compliance with an oath, which it was almoſt guilt to make, you decree your only ſon to everlaſting ſhame and remorſe! Act how I will, I ſhall never be happy more. I cannot live under your malediction; and ſhould I give up my friend, my conſcience will reproach me every inſtant of my exiſtence. Can I draw the breath which he prolonged, and ceaſe

ceaſe to remember, that I have abandoned him to want and miſery? It were vain to flatter myſelf that he will condeſcend to eſcape either, by the munificence which you offer as a compenſation for my friendſhip. No: I cannot believe that his ſenſible and independent nature is ſo changed; circumſtances never had any power over the nobility of his ſoul.

"Misfortune, which threw the Count Sobieſki, friendleſs, on the bounty of England, cannot make him appear otherwiſe in my eyes, than as the idol of Warſaw, whoſe ſmile was honour, and whoſe friendſhip conferred diſtinction.

"Though deprived of the ſplendor of command; though the eager circle of friends no longer cluſter round him; though a ſtranger in this country, and without a home; though in place of an equipage and retinue, he is followed by calamity and neglect; yet, in my mind, I ſtill ſee him in a car of triumph: I ſee, not only the oppoſer of his nation's ene-

mies,

mies, but the vanquiſher of his own deſires; I ſee the heir of a princely houſe, who, when mankind have deſerted him, is yet encompaſſed by his virtues; I ſee him, though caſt out from a hardened and unjuſt ſociety, ſtill ſurrounded by the lingering ſpirits of thoſe, who were called to better worlds!

"And this is the man, my dear father, (whom I am ſure, had he been of any other country than Poland, you would have ſelected from all other men, to be the friend and example of your ſon;) this is he whom you command me to thruſt away!

"I beſeech you to examine this injunction! I am now writing under the ſame roof with him: it depends on you, my ever revered father, whether I am doing ſo for the laſt time; whether this is the laſt day, in which your ſon is to conſider himſelf a man of honour; whether he is henceforth to be a wretch, overwhelmed with ſhame and ſorrow!

"I have

"I have not yet dared to utter one word of what your cruel orders dictate, to my unhappy friend; he is now retired to ſeek ſome reſt, after the anguiſh of having witneſſed the death of Lady Tinemouth, who died this night, in conſequence of an illneſs, which laſted only eight-and-forty hours. Should I have to tell him that he is to loſe me too—but I cannot add more. Your own heart, my dear father, muſt tell you, that my ſoul is on the rack, until I have an anſwer to this letter.

"Before I ſhut my paper, let me implore you on my knees! whatever you may decide, do not hate me; do not load my breaking heart with a parent's curſe! Whatever I may be, however low and degraded in my own eyes, ſtill that I have ſacrificed what is moſt precious to me, to my father, will impart the only conſolation which will then have power to reach your dutiful ſon,

P. SOMERSET.

"*Harrowby-Abbey,*
five o'clock in the morning."

Dr.

Dr. Cavendiſh remained in a profound ſleep, whilſt Pembroke, with an aching heart, having written the above letter, and diſpatched it with a man and horſe, tried to compoſe himſelf to half an hour's forgetfulneſs of life and its turmoils; but he found his attempts as ineffectual as thoſe of his friend.

Thaddeus toſſed and tumbled on his reſtleſs pillow. Reluctant to diſturb the Doctor and Somerſet, who he hoped, having leſs cauſe for regret, had found that repoſe he ſought for in vain, he remained in bed. He longed for morning. Any change of ſituation ſeemed to his irritated nerves, better than the ſtate in which he was; and with ſome gleams of pleaſure, he watched the dawn, and the riſing of the ſun, behind the oppoſite hill. He got up, opened the window, and looking out, ſaw a man throw himſelf off a horſe, which was all in foam, and enter the houſe.

Surprized at this circumſtance, he deſcended

ſcended to the parlour, where he found the man; who, being Pembroke's meſſenger, had returned expreſs from the caſtle, bearing an order from Sir Robert, (who was taken alarmingly ill,) that his ſon ſhould come back immediately.

Diſmayed with this new diſtreſs, Mr. Somerſet preſſed the Count ſo cloſely to his breaſt, when he bade him farewell, that a more ſuſpicious perſon might have apprehended that it was to be a final parting: but Thaddeus diſcerned nothing more in the anguiſh of his friend's countenance, than fear for the ſafety of Sir Robert; and fervently wiſhing his recovery, he bade Pembroke remember, that ſhould more aſſiſtance be neceſſary, Dr. Cavendiſh would remain at the Abbey until Lady Albina's return to the Wold.

Mr. Somerſet being gone; towards noon, when the Count was anxiouſly waiting the appearance of the phyſician from the room of his ſiſter, he was ſurprized at the abrupt entrance of two gentlemen.

gentlemen. He roſe, and bowing, inquired what was their buſineſs? The elder of the men, with a fierce countenance, and a voice of thunder, announced himſelf to be the Earl of Tinemouth, and the other his ſon.

"We are come," continued he, ſtanding at a haughty diſtance, "we are come to carry from this neſt of infamy, Lady Albina Stanhope, whom ſome one of her mother's paramours,—perhaps you, Sir, dared to ſteal from her father's houſe yeſterday evening. And I am here to give you that chaſtiſement which your audacity deſerves."

With difficulty the Count Sobieſki ſuppreſſed the paſſions which were riſing in his breaſt. He turned a ſcornful glance on the perſon of Lord Harwold, (who, with an air of inſufferable deriſion, was coolly meaſuring his figure through an eye-glaſs;) and then replying to the Earl, ſaid in a firm voice; "My Lord, whoever you ſuppoſe me to be,

be, it matters not; I now ſtand in the place of Lady Tinemouth's executor; and, to my laſt gaſp, I will prove myſelf the defender of her injured name."

"Her lover!" interrupted Lord Harwold, turning on his heel.

"Her defender, Sir!" repeated Thaddeus, with a tremendous frown; "and ſhame and ſorrow will purſue that ſon, who requires a ſtranger to ſupply his duty."

"Wretch!" cried the Earl, forgetting his aſſumed loftineſs, and advancing paſſionately towards Thaddeus, with his ſtick held up: "How dare you addreſs ſuch language to an Engliſh nobleman?"

"By the right of nature, which holds her laws over all mankind;" returned he, calmly looking on the raiſed ſtick. "When an Engliſh nobleman forgets that he is a ſon, he deſerves reproach from his meaneſt vaſſal."

"You ſee, my lord," cried Harwold, ſliding behind his father, "what we bring

bring on ourſelves by harbouring theſe democratic foreigners! Sir," added he, addreſſing himſelf to Thaddeus, "your dangerous principles ſhall be communicated to the alien-office! Such fellows ought to be hanged."

Sobieſki eyed the enraged little lord, with contempt; and turning to the Earl, who was again going to ſpeak, he ſaid in an unaltered tone, "I cannot gueſs, Lord Tinemouth, what is the reaſon of this attack on me. I came hither by accident; I found the Counteſs ill; and, from reſpect to her excellent qualities, I remained with her, until her eyes were cloſed for ever. She deſired to ſee her daughter before ſhe died. What human heart could deny a mother ſuch a requeſt? and my friend Pembroke Somerſet undertook to bring Lady Albina to the Abbey."

"Pembroke Somerſet!" echoed the Earl. "A pretty guard for my daughter truly! I have no doubt that he is juſt ſuch a raſcal as his father; juſt ſuch a

perſon as yourſelf! I am not to be impoſed on by your falſehoods: I know Lady Tinemouth to have been a diſgrace to me; and you, to be that German adventurer, on whoſe account I ſent her from London."

Surpriſed at this unexpected calumny on the memory of a woman, whoſe fame, from any other mouth, came as unſullied as purity itſelf, Thaddeus gazed with horror at the furious countenance of the man whom he believed to be his father. His heart ſwelled: but not deigning to reply to a charge, as unmanly as it was falſe, he calmly took out of his pocket the two letters, which the Counteſs had dictated to her huſband and her ſon.

Lord Harwold tore his open, caſt his eyes over the firſt words, then crumpling it in his hand, threw it from him, exclaiming, "I am not to be frightened, either by her arts, or the lies of her fellows."

Thaddeus, no longer maſter of himſelf, ſprung towards this unnatural ſon, and

ſeizing

ſeizing his arm with the ſtrength of a Hercules, "Lord Harwold!" cried he, in a dreadful voice, "were it not that I have ſome mercy on you, for that parent's ſake, to whom, like a parricide, you are giving a ſecond death, by ſuch murderous ſlander, I would reſent her wrongs at the hazard of your worthleſs life!"

"My lord! my lord!" cried the trembling Harwold, quaking under the gripe of Thaddeus, and ſhrinking from the terrible brightneſs of his eyes; "my lord! my lord, ſave me!"

The Earl, almoſt ſuffocated with rage, called out, "Ruffian! Let go my ſon!" and again raiſing his arm, aimed a blow at the head of Thaddeus, who, wrenching the ſtick out of the foaming lord's hand, ſnapped it in two, and threw the pieces out of the window.

Lord Harwold took this opportunity to ring the bell violently; on which ſummons, his own two ſervants entered the room.

"Now, you low-born, inſolent ſcoundrel!" cried the diſarmed Earl, ſtamping with his feet, and pointing to the men who ſtood at the door; "You ſhall be turned by the neck and heels, out of this houſe. Richard, James, collar the fellow inſtantly."

Thaddeus only extended his arm to the men, (who were looking confuſedly on each other,) and calmly ſaid, "If either of you attempt to obey this command of your lord, you ſhall have cauſe to repent it."

The men retreated. The Earl repeated his orders.

"Raſcals! do as I command you, or inſtantly prepare to quit my ſervice. I will teach you," added he, clenching his fiſt at the Count, who ſtood reſolutely and ſerenely before him, "I will teach you how to behave to a man of high birth."

The footmen were again deterred from approaching, by a glance from the intimidating

dating eyes of Thaddeus; who, turning with ſtern dignity to the ſtorming Earl, "You can teach me nothing about high birth," ſaid he, "that I do not already know. Could it be of any independent benefit to a man, then had I not received the taunts and inſults which you have dared to caſt upon me."

At that moment, Dr. Cavendiſh having heard a buſtle, made his appearance. Amazed at the ſight of two ſtrangers, who from their enraged countenances, and the proud elevation with which Thaddeus was ſtanding between them, he rightly judged to be the Earl and his ſon, he advanced towards his friend, intending to ſupport him in the attack, which he ſaw was menaced, by the violent geſtures of his viſitors.

"Dr. Cavendiſh," ſaid Thaddeus, ſpeaking to him as he approached; "your name muſt be a paſſport to the confidence of any man; I therefore ſhall gratify the huſband of my ever-lamented friend, by

quitting this houſe; but I delegate to you the office with which ſhe entruſted me. I leave you in charge of her ſacred remains; and of the jewels, which you will find in her apartment. She deſired that half of them might be given, with her bleſſing, to her daughter, and the other half, with her pardon, to her ſon.

"Tell me, Dr. Cavendiſh," cried the Earl, as Thaddeus was paſſing him to leave the room; "Who is that inſolent fellow? By heaven, he ſhall ſmart for this!"

"Aye, that he ſhall," added Lord Harwold, "if I have any intereſt with government."

Dr. Cavendiſh was preparing to ſpeak, when Thaddeus, turning round at this laſt threat of the Viſcount's, ſaid, "If I did not know myſelf to be as high above Lord Harwold, as heaven is above the earth, perhaps he might provoke me to treat him as he merits; but I ſpurn ſuch reſentment, as I deſpiſe him. For you, my lord," added he, addreſſing the Earl, with

with an agitated countenance and voice, "there is an angel in heaven, who pleads againſt the inſults you have obſtinately heaped upon an innocent man."

Thaddeus diſappeared as he uttered the laſt word; and, haſtening from the houſe and park, ſtopped at a farmer's cottage, near the brow of the hill. The owners of this humble little place, being the parents of one of Lady Tinemouth's maids, gladly welcomed the ſo highly praiſed Mr. Conſtantine; and offered him the command of their houſe, until he might find it convenient to quit the neighbourhood.

Any proſpect of repoſe, promiſed elyſium to him: with haraſſed and torn nerves, he took poſſeſſion of an apartment, which looked down upon the road that led from the Abbey to the town. The rapidity of the late events, bewildered his ſenſes like the illuſions of a dream. He had ſeen his father, his brother, his ſiſter; and, moſt probably, he had parted from them for ever! At leaſt,

he hoped, that he ſhould never again be tortured with the ſight of Lord Tinemouth or his ſon.

"How!" thought he, whilſt he walked up and down his ſolitary apartment, "how could the noble nature of my mother love ſuch a man? And how could he have held ſo long an empire over the pure heart of the Counteſs?"

Over and over again, he aſked himſelf the queſtion, but could return no anſwer: He could no where diſcern in the bloated viſage, and paſſionate geſtures of the Earl, any of that beauty of countenance, or grace of manners, which had alike charmed Thereſe Sobieſki, and the tender Adeliza. Like thoſe hideous chaſms, which are dug deep in the land by the impetuous ſweep of a torrent,—the courſe of violent paſſions, leaves vaſt and irreparable traces in the ſoul, and on the features. So it was with Lord Tinemouth.

"Gracious Providence!" ejaculated Thaddeus; "How legibly does vice or virtue

virtue write itſelf on the countenance! The Earl's figure and face, may have been fine, but the lineaments of profligacy have now degraded every part of him. Good God! Can he be my father! Can it be his blood, that is now running in my veins? Can it be his blood, that riſes at this moment, with deteſtation againſt him?"

Before the ſun ſet, Thaddeus was aroufed from theſe painful ſoliloquies, by ſtill more painful emotions: He ſaw from his window, a hearſe driving at full gallop up the road, which aſcended to the Abbey; and, preſently return, with a more ſolemn pace, followed by a poſt-chaiſe, and the Earl's coach.

"Inhuman wretches!" cried Thaddeus, leaning out of the window; and, purſuing, with his eye, the tips of the ſable plumes, as the cavalcade wound round the road; "Could you not allow this poor corſe a little reſt? Muſt her injuries be extended to the grave? Muſt her cold

relics be insulted, be hurried to the tomb, without reverence, without decency!"

"The noble heart of Thaddeus was convulsed with horror, at this climax of the Earl's barbarity. Dr. Cavendish entered: he spoke of the perpetrators of an act, which he deemed sacrilege against the dead; but Thaddeus could not bear it; and he interrupted him by inquiring, how Lady Albina had borne the removal of her mother's remains.

"Very ill," returned the Doctor; "and though I warned the Earl, that to compel her Ladyship to follow the hearse, would be at the peril of her life, yet he would not be softened. He put her into the coach in a state of insensibility, with no other assistant than a woman servant; and then, loaded with the secret curses of every honest heart, I saw him set off in a post-chaise, which was already occupied by his detestable son. Heaven's malediction must follow them!"

The Doctor purſued the ſubject. Sobieſki's wearied ſpirits liſtened to him with patience; for nothing could now be ſaid, to increaſe an abhorrence, which had gained its height. He acknowledged to himſelf, that he hated the Earl; and he heard, in gloomy ſilence, the new crimes, repounted by his friend.

In the midſt of this depreſſing converſation, a courier arrived from Dr. Cavendiſh's Stamford patient, deſiring that he would return immediately. The gentleman having ſuffered a relapſe, Cavendiſh, with ſome reluctance to quit the Count, (whom he ſtill knew by no other name than Conſtantine,) ordered the chaiſe to the door. He ſhook hands with Thaddeus, requeſted he would let him hear from him, and bidding him many affectionate adieus, looked out of the carriage window, until the faint light of the moon, and the fading glimmer of the cottage-candles, failed to make the little ſpot, which contained his friend, even diſcernable.

CHAP. V.

FOR the first time during many nights, Thaddeus slept soundly; but his dreams were disturbed; and he awoke from them at an early hour, unrefreshed and in much fever.

The simple breakfast which his cottage host and hostess set before him, was hardly touched. Their nicely dreſt dinner met with the same fate. He was ill, and possessed neither appetite nor spirits to eat. The good people being too civil to intrude upon him, he sat alone in his window from eight o'clock, (at which hour he had arisen,) until the cawing of the rooks, as they returned to the Abbey woods, reminded him of the approach of evening. He was uneasy at the absence of

of Somerſet; not ſo much on his own account as on that of Sir Robert, whoſe encreaſed danger might have occaſioned this delay: However, he hoped otherwiſe. Longing earneſtly for a temporary aſylum under the roof of his friend, he truſted, that the ſympathy of Pembroke would heal all his wounds, and fit him (if it were required) yet farther to brave the buffets of adverſe fortune. Nor was Miſs Beaufort forgotten. If ever one idea more than another, ſweetened the bitterneſs of his reflections, it was the remembrance of the lovely Mary. Whenever her image roſe before him; whether he were ſtanding with folded arms, and looking with vacant gaze on the valley beneath; or when caſt upon his watchful pillow, he opened his aching eyes to the morning light; ſtill, as her beautiful figure preſented itſelf to his mind, he ſighed; but it was a ſigh laden with balm; it did not tear his breaſt like thoſe which were wrung from him by the hard hand of calamity and inſult; it

was

was the soft breath of love, which makes man dream of heaven, whilst it betrays him to the grave. Thaddeus thought it delightful to recollect how she had looked on him; it was happiness, to know that he owed his liberty to her; and the anticipation, that he should again dwell in her smiles; again draw bliss from her eyes, swelled, agitated, and intoxicated his soul.

"Sweet Mary!" murmured he, "I shall see thee once more! I shall again experience thy kindness! I will thank thee with my heart; and think myself blest, in being allowed the priviledge of loving thee in silence, and for ever."

The sight of Pembroke riding through the farmer's fields towards the cottage, agreeably recalled the wandering mind of Sobieski. He went out to meet him; Mr. Somerset, putting his horse on a gallop, was at his friend's side, and had alighted, before he could cross the first meadow. Thaddeus inquired after the Baronet's health. Pembroke answered the question, with

with an incoherency, devoid of all meaning. Thaddeus looked at him with surprise. They walked towards the house, but he did not seem to recover himself; his absence of mind, and the wild rambling of his eyes whenever he was spoken to, were so striking, that the Count entertained no doubt of some dreadful accident.

As soon as they entered the little parlour, Pembroke threw himself into a chair, and, throwing off his hat, wiped the perspiration from his face, which though a cold October evening, was streaming down his forehead. Thaddeus endured a suspence almost too painful to be borne.

"What is the matter, dear Pembroke? Is Miss Beaufort well?"

"Perfectly," returned he: "Every body is well, excepting myself and my father, who, I verily believe, has lost his senses; at any rate he will drive me mad."

The manner in which this reply was uttered, astonished Thaddeus so much, that he could only gaze with wonder, on the

the convulsed features of his friend. Pembroke observed his amazement, and laying his hand on his arm, "My dear, dear Sobieski!" said he, "What do I not owe to you? Good Heaven, how humbled am I in your sight! But there is a power above, who knows how intimately you are woven with every artery of this heart."

"I believe it, my kind Pembroke," cried Thaddeus, yet more alarmed than before; "Tell me what it is that distresses you? If my counsel, or my sympathy, can offer any thing to comfort or assist you, you know I am your own."

Pembroke burst into tears, and covering his streaming eyes with his handkerchief, exclaimed, "I am indeed distressed! Distressed even beyond your comfort. O! how can I speak it! You will despise my father, Thaddeus! You will spurn me?"

"Impossible," cried he, with energy; though his flushed cheek and fainting heart, immediately declared that he had anticipated what he must hear.

"I see,

"I see," cried Pembroke, regarding the altered features of his friend with a glance of agony; "I see, that you think it is possible, that my father can sink me below my own contempt."

The benumbing touch of ingratitude ran through the veins of Thaddeus; his frame was chilled, was petrified; but his just affection and calmed countenance, proclaimed how true a judgment he passed on the whole. He took the burning hand of Mr. Somerset in his own hand, and with a steady and consoling voice, said, "Assure yourself dear Pembroke, whatever be the commands of your father, I shall adhere to them. I can understand by these generous emotions, that he objects to receive me as your friend. Perhaps," added he, a flash of suspicion gleaming through his mind; "perhaps Miss Beaufort may have perceived the devotedness of my heart, and disdaining my——."

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" cried Pembroke, starting from his chair; "Do not implicate

implicate my poor cousin? Do not add to her disappointment, the misery that you suspect her! No, Thaddeus," continued he, in a calmer tone, "Mary Beaufort loves you: she confessed it in an agony of grief on my bosom, just before I came away; and only through her, I dare ever expect to meet forgiveness from *you*. In spite of my father, you may marry her. She has no curse to dread; she need not sacrifice all that is most precious in her sight, to the obstinate caprice of criminal resentment."

"A curse!" re-iterated Thaddeus. "How is this? what have I done to deserve such hatred from your father?"

"O! nothing;" cried Pembroke, "nothing. My father never saw you. My father thanks you for all that you have done for me; but it is your country that he hates. Some Polander, years back, injured him; and my father took a fatal oath against the whole nation. He declares, that he cannot, he will not break it, were he

he by ſo doing, to ſave his own life, or even mine; for, (Heaven forgive me!) I was this morning wrought up to ſuch a pitch of phrenzy, that I threatened to deſtroy myſelf, rather than ſacrifice my gratitude and honour to his cruel commands! Nay, to convince you that his is no perſonal enmity to yourſelf, he ordered me to give you writings, which will put you in poſſeſſion of five hundred a year for ever. I have them with me."

All the pride of his princely houſe, roſe at once in the breaſt of Thaddeus, Though full of indignation at this inſult of Sir Robert's, he regarded the averted face of his friend with compaſſion, whilſt in a firm voice, he rejected the degrading compromiſe.

"Tell your father," added he, addreſſing Pembroke in a tone, which even his affection could not ſoften from a command; "that my abſence is not to be bought with money, nor my friendſhip ſo rewarded."

Pembroke

Pembroke covered his burning face with his hands. This ſight, at once brought down the haughty ſpirit of the Count, who continued, in gentler accents; "Whatever be the ſentiments of Sir Robert Somerſet, they ſhall meet with due attention from me. He is your father, therefore I reſpect him; but he has put it out of his power to oblige me: I cannot accept his bounty. Though your heart, my deareſt Pembroke, is above all price, yet I will make it a ſacrifice to your duty."—And by ſo doing, put the laſt ſeal on my misfortunes! was the meaning of the heavy ſigh which accompanied his laſt words.

Pembroke traverſed the room in an agony. "Merciful Providence!" cried he, wringing his claſped hands, "direct me! O! Thaddeus, if you could read my tortured heart, you would pity me; you would ſee that this affair is tearing my ſoul from my body. What am I to do? I cannot, I will not, part with you for ever."

The Count went up to him, and drew him

him to a ſeat: "Be ſatisfied," ſaid he, "that I am convinced of your affection. Whatever may happen, this aſſurance will be ſufficient to give *me* comfort; therefore, I entreat you, dear Pembroke, by that affection, not to bring regret to me, and reproach on yourſelf, by diſobeying the will of your father! If we ſeparate for life, remember my beloved friend, that the ſpan of our exiſtence here is ſhort; we ſhall meet again in a happier world; perhaps more bleſt, for having immolated our wiſhes to hard duty in this."

"Ceaſe, Sobieſki, ceaſe!" cried Pembroke, "I can draw no conſolation from this reaſoning. It is not duty to obey a hatred little ſhort of diſtraction; and if we now ſeparate, I feel, that I ſhall never know peace again. Good Heaven! what comfort can I find, when you are expoſed to all the indignities, which the world levels againſt the unfortunate? Can I indulge in the luxuries of my father's houſe, when I know that you have neither a home nor

nor ſubſiſtence? No, Thaddeus, I am not ſuch a villain. I will not give you up, though my father ſhould load me with curſes;—I truſt there is a juſt power above who would avert them."

Perceiving that argument at this time, would not only be fruitleſs, but might probably incenſe his friend's irritated nature, to the commiſſion of ſome raſh action, Thaddeus pretended to overlook the frantic geſture and voice, which terminated this ſpeech: and aſſuming a ſerene air, replied: "Let this be the ſubject of future converſation. At preſent, I muſt conjure you, by the happineſs of us both, to return to the caſtle. You know my meſſage to Sir Robert. Preſent my reſpects to your aunt; and," added he, after a pauſe, "aſſure Miſs Beaufort, that whilſt I have life, her goodneſs will be its moſt animating principle."

Pembroke interrupted him. "Why theſe meſſages, dear Thaddeus? Do not ſuppoſe, though I fulfil my father's order

to

to return to Somerſet to-night, that it is our ſeparation. Gracious Heaven! Is it ſo eaſy to part for ever?"

"Not for ever! O no:" replied Thaddeus, graſping his hand; "we ſhall ſee each other again; only meanwhile, repeat thoſe meſſages to your aunt and couſin. Go, my dear Pembroke, to your father: and may the Lord of Heaven bleſs you!"

The laſt words were ſpoken in almoſt a ſtifled voice, as he opened his arms and ſtrained his friend to his breaſt.

"I ſhall ſee you to-morrow?" cried Pembroke; "on no other condition I leave you now."

Thaddeus made no farther anſwer to this demand, (which he determined ſhould never be granted,) than a ſecond embrace. Pembroke went out of the room, to order his horſes; then returning he ſtood at the door, and holding out his hand to the Count, ſaid, "Farewell, till to-morrow." Thaddeus ſhook it warmly, and he diſappeared.

The

The outward gate closed after his friend, but the Count remained on the seat into which he had thrown himself. He did not venture to move, lest he should by chance catch a second glance of Pembroke from the window. Now that he was gone, he acknowledged the full worth of what he had relinquished. He had resigned a man who loved him; one who had known and revered his ever-lamented grandfather and his mother; the only one with whom he could have discoursed of their virtues! He had severed the link which united his present state with his former fortunes; and throwing his arms along a table that stood near him, he leaned his aching head upon them, and in idea, followed, with a bleeding heart, the progress and reception of his friend at the Castle.

The racking misery which tortured the mind of Mr. Somerset, was not borne with equal resignation. Conscious of his having inflicted fresh wounds on the breast of his noble friend, his spirits were so ill

adapted

adapted to ſociety, that he was pleaſed rather than diſappointed, when he found the ſupper-room at the caſtle quite vacant, and only one cover on the table awaiting his arrival.

He aſked a few queſtions of the ſervants, who informed him that it was paſt twelve o'clock; and that Sir Robert, who was worſe, had retired to bed early in the evening.

"And where are my aunt and couſin?" demanded Pembroke.

One of the men replied, that in conſequence of Miſs Beaufort's having been ſuddenly indiſpoſed, both the ladies left the room before eleven. Pembroke readily gueſſed the cauſe of this diſorder: he too truly aſcribed it to Mary's anxiety reſpecting the reception which the Count Sobieſki would give to his diſgraceful errand; and ſighing bitterly, he ſaid no more, but went to his chamber.

The reſtleſs ſtate of his mind awoke Mr. Somerſet by times. Anxious for the

success of an application, which he intended to make to Miss Beaufort, he traversed the terrace for an hour before he was summoned to breakfast. The Baronet continuing unwell, the ladies only were in the parlour when he entered. Mrs. Dorothy, who learnt the particulars of the late events from her niece, longed to ask Pembroke how his friend would act on her brother's command; but every time that she moved her lips, his inflamed eye and wan countenance made her stop, and fear to venture on the subject. Mary sat in mute dejection, watching the agitation of her cousin; and when he rose, and took his hat to leave the room, she looked wistfully towards him. Pembroke turned round at the same moment, and holding out his hand to her, said, "Come, Mary, I want to say something to you. Will you walk with me on the terrace?"

Miss Beaufort, with trepidation, and a beating heart took his arm, and proceeded in silence, until they reached the gravel walk.

walk. A mutual and deep-drawn ſigh, was the firſt opening of a converſation, on which the ſouls of both hung with intereſt, hope, and dread. Pembroke was the firſt who began.

"My dear, dear Mary," ſaid he, "you are now my ſole dependance. From what I told you yeſterday of my father's ſtubborn inflexibility, we can have no hope of his relenting: indeed, after what has paſſed, I could not flatter myſelf that Thaddeus Sobieſki would, on any account, ſubmit to an obligation at his hands. Already he has refuſed, with all the indignation I expected, Sir Robert's offer of an annuity. My dear couſin, how can I exiſt, and yet witneſs this noble friend in diſtreſs, and living without the ſuccour of my friendſhip? Heaven knows, this muſt be the caſe; for I would ſooner periſh than venture to inſult the man, whom my father has treated ſo ill, with any pecuniary offers from me! Therefore, dear girl, it is on you alone that I depend. Thaddeus adores

you, and you love him. Marry him, my beloved couſin," cried he, preſſing her hand to his lips, "and relieve my heart from a load of miſery! Be generous, my ſweet Mary," added he, ſupporting her now trembling frame againſt his breaſt; "act up to your noble nature, and offer him, by me, that hand, which his calamities and diſintereſtedneſs preclude him from requeſting."

Miſs Beaufort, hardly able to articulate, from the emotions which prevented her utterance, replied, "I would give him all that I poſſeſs, could it purchaſe him one tranquil hour; I would ſerve him for ever, could I do it and be unknown; but——"

"O, do not heſitate! Do not doubt!" interrupted Pembroke. "To ſerve your friends, I know you are capable of the moſt extraordinary exertions; I know there is nothing within the verge of poſſibility, that your generous diſpoſition would not attempt; then, my beloved Mary,

Mary, dare to be what you are, by having the magnanimity to act as you know you ought; by offering your hand to him, ſhew the noble Sobieſki, that you really deſerve the devotion of a hero's heart."

"Dear Pembroke," replied Miſs Beaufort, wiping the ſtill gliding tears from her burning cheek, "after the confeſſion which you drew from me yeſterday, I will not deny, that to poſſeſs the eſteem of your friend, would render me the happieſt of created beings; but I cannot believe what your ſanguine affection tells me. I cannot ſuppoſe, ſituated as I was at Lady Dundas's, under a cloud of faſhion, and ſurrounded by frivolous and contemptible ſociety, that he ſhould diſcover any thing in me to reſpect: every way embarraſſed as I was, diſliking my companions, afraid of my own intereſt in him, a veil was drawn over my mind, through which he could neither judge of my good nor bad qualities. How then can I flatter myſelf, or do the Count

Sobieſki ſuch an injury, as to imagine that he could conceive any preference for ſuch an inſignificant character as I muſt have appeared?"

It was ſome time before Pembroke could ſhake the hold which this prepoſſeſſion had taken of Miſs Beaufort's mind. After having ſet in every poſſible light, the terms with which his friend had ſpoken of her, he at length convinced her, of what her heart ſo earneſtly wiſhed to believe, that ſhe was not entirely indifferent to Sobieſki.

Mr. Somerſet's next atchievement was to overcome her ſcruples againſt commiſſioning him with the meſſage he was deſirous to communicate to Thaddeus. From the continual recurrence of her fears, that the warmth of her couſin might have too highly coloured the firſt object of debate, this taſk was not more eaſy to accompliſh than the former. In vain ſhe remonſtrated, in vain ſhe doubted, in vain demurred; Pembroke would not be denied;

denied; and as with faultering lips, she assented to the permission which he almost extorted, she threw her arms round his neck, and implored him to be careful of her honour; to remember, that she put into his charge, all that was most precious to her,—the modesty of her sex, and her own delicacy.

Pembroke, delighted at this consent, notwithstanding he received it through the medium of many tears, embraced his cousin with ten thousand animating promises of future happiness; and having allowed her to enter the house, mounted his horse, and set off on full gallop towards Harrowby-Hill.

CHAP. VI.

WHEN Thaddeus recovered from the reverie into which he fell on the departure of Mr. Somerſet, he conſidered how he might remove out of a country, in which he had only met, and occaſioned diſtreſs.

The horrid price that Pembroke's father had ſet on the continuance of their friendſhip, rendered it neceſſary that his flight ſhould be immediate. Averſe to a ſecond interview with his friend, which could only produce them pain, he determined that not another morn ſhould riſe upon him in Lincolnſhire; and taking a pen, with all the future lonelineſs of his fate painted on his heart, he wrote two letters.

One he addreſſed to Mr. Somerſet, bidding him that farewell, which he confeſſed

he

he could never take. As he wrote, his hand trembled, his boſom ſwelled; and he haſtily ſhut his eye-lids, to withhold his tears from ſhewing themſelves on the paper: his emotion, his grief, were driven back, were concealed; but the tenderneſs of his ſoul flowed over the letter. He forgave Pembroke's father, for Pembroke's ſake; and in ſpite of their perſonal diſunion, he vowed that no earthly power ſhould reſtrain his love from following the ſteps of his friend, even into the regions of eternity. He cloſed his melancholy epiſtle, with informing Mr. Somerſet, that as he ſhould quit England directly, any ſearch after him, which his generous nature might dictate, would be in vain.

Though Thaddeus Sobieſki would have diſdained a life of dependance on the greateſt potentate of the world; though he rejected with the ſame ſincerity, a ſimilar propoſal from his friend; and deſpiſed the degrading offer of Sir Robert;

yet he did not disparage his dignity, nor infringe on the disinterested nature of friendship, when he accepted, and resolved to retain, the money which Pembroke had conveyed to him in prison. Thaddeus never acted but from principle. His honourable and penetrating mind, knew exactly at what point to draw the tender thread of delicacy. Pride and independence, were with him distinct terms. Receiving assistance from a friend, and leaning on him wholly for support, have different meanings; he accepted the first with gratitude: he would have thought it impossible to live and endure the last. On these premises, Pembroke was never pained by an attempt to return his bounty. Indeed, Thaddeus would have considered himself unworthy to confer a benefit, if he had not known how to receive one. This spirit left no part of Miss Beaufort's obligation on his mind, but its sweetness; and with these impressions, and a throbbing heart, he began a short address to her.

"To

"*To Miss Beaufort.*

"My faculties seem to lose their power, when I take up my pen to address, for the first and the last time, Miss Beaufort. I hardly know what I would say — what I ought; I dare not venture to write all that I feel. But have you not been my benefactress? Did you not assert my character, and give me liberty, when I was calumniated and in distress? Did you not ward from me the scorn of unpitying folly? Did you not console me with your own compassion? You have done all this; and surely you will not despise the gratitude of a heart, which you have condescended to sooth and to comfort? At least, I cannot leave England for ever, without imploring blessings on the head of Miss Beaufort; without thanking her on my knees, on which I am writing, for that gracious and benign spirit, which discovered a breaking heart under the mask of serenity; which penetrated through the garb of poverty and dependance, and saw that

the contemned Conſtantine was not what he ſeemed! Your ſmiles, Miſs Beaufort; your voice, ſpeaking commiſeration, were my ſweeteſt conſolations during thoſe heavy months of ſorrow, which I endured at Dundas-Houſe: I contemplated you as a pitying angel, ſent to reconcile me to a life, which had already become a burthen. Theſe are the benefits which Miſs Beaufort has beſtowed on a friendleſs exile, theſe are the benefits which ſhe had beſtowed on me! and they are written on my ſoul. Not until I go down into the grave ſhall they be forgotten. Oh! not even then, for when I riſe again, I ſhall find them ſtill regiſtered there!

"Farewell, moſt reſpected, moſt dear Miſs Beaufort. May the Father of Heaven bleſs, with his choiceſt care, her, whoſe name ſhall ever be firſt in the prayers of her moſt grateful, moſt devoted ſervant,

THADDEUS CONSTANTINE SOBIESKI.

"*Harrowby Hill, eleven o'clock at night.*"

When

When he finiſhed this epiſtle, with a trembling hand he incloſed it in the cover, which contained Somerſet's; then writing a few lines to the good old farmer, he begged him to accept the note which they contained, as a ſmall compenſation for his great hoſpitality; and, having ſealed both packets, he diſpoſed them ſo on the table, that they might be the firſt things ſeen on entering the room.

It now being midnight, he thought it high time to ſet out on his diſmal journey. Having tied ſome linen in a grey ſilk handkerchief, (which had formerly been wrapped round his neck by Lady Sara, one wet evening in Groſvenor-Place;) he put all his remaining money into his pocket. It did not exceed thirty pounds; the reſt having been expended in his way to the Abbey, and in defraying little expences attending the illneſs of the Counteſs, to which her purſe (ever kept low by the tardineſs of the Earl's payments)

was

was not prepared to anſwer. However, as he determined to walk to London, where he intended to embark for America, he hoped that it would at leaſt hold out, until he landed on a ſhore, whence he truſted never to return.

"Ah!" cried he, as he gently cloſed the window by which he leaped into the little garden, "What accumulated ſins, O Ruſſia, will be heaped upon thy head! Every haſty ſigh that rebels in my breaſt, againſt the almighty hand, which is again driving me out a wanderer on the wide world, calls vengeance upon thee! How many, wretched country!" added he, reſting on the bar of the outward gate; "how many haſt thou driven from their homes! how many haſt thou made vagabonds, and murderers, for that ſcanty pittance, of which, with remorſeleſs and wanton gripe, they were deprived by thee!—Oh, righteous Power of Juſtice and Mercy!" cried he, ſtretching his arms towards that heaven, over which the piercing winds of

a bleak

a bleak October night were ſcattering the thick and gloomy clouds; "grant me fortitude to bear, with reſignation to thy will, the miſeries I have yet to encounter. Oh!" added he, his heart melting as the idea preſented itſelf; "teach me to forget what I have been! Teach me to forget, that on this dreadful night, laſt year, I claſped the dying body of my dear grandfather in theſe arms!"

He could not ſpeak farther; but leaning his pale face againſt the gate, remained for a few minutes diſſolved in painful recollection: then recovering himſelf by a ſudden ſtart, he proceeded with haſty ſteps through the different meadows, until they conducted him into the high road.

It was on the tenth of October, 1795, that the Count Sobieſki commenced this lonely and melancholy journey. It was on the tenth of October, 1794, that he found the Palatine, bleeding to death, in the midſt of a heap of ſlain. The co-incidence of his preſent ſufferings, with thoſe of a twelve-

month past, powerfully affected Thaddeus; they recalled remembrances to him in their most vivid colours, which time, and the many intermediate events, had considerably softened.

Distressed by these sorrowful scenes, which memory, ever true to her nature, raised before his mind's eye in rapid and long succession; he quickened his pace; he slackened it; he quickened it again; but nothing could rid him of those tormenting images, which seemed to glide around him like visible spirits of the departed.

When the dawn broke, and the sun rose, he found himself advanced several miles on the south side of Ponton Hill. The ivy aisles of Harrowby Abbey were discernable through the mist; and the towers of Somerset Castle, from their height and situation, were as distinctly seen as if he had been at their base. Neither of these objects were calculated to raise the spirits of Thaddeus. The sorrows of the Countess, whose eyes he so recently had closed, and the

treatment

treatment which he afterwards received from the man to whom he owed his life, were recollections which made him turn away from the abbey with a pang, and fix his eyes on Somerset. He looked towards its ivied head, with all the regret and all the tenderness which can overflow a human heart: under that roof, he believed the eyes of his adored Mary were sealed in sleep; and in an instant his agitated soul addressed her as if she had been present.

"Farewell, most lovely, most beloved! The conviction, that I resign even the hope of ever again beholding thee, to the peace of my friend, shall give me comfort, when I am drawing my breath in a far, far distant region."

In this way, thus communing with his own troubled spirit, he walked forward the whole day on his way to London. Totally absorbed in meditation, he did not remark the gaze of curiosity which followed his elegant yet distressed figure, as he

passed

paſſed through the different towns and villages. Muſing on the paſt, the preſent, and the future, he neither felt hunger nor thirſt; but, with a fixed eye, and abſtracted countenance, purſued his route, until night and wearineſs overtook him in the midſt of the high road, far from any houſe.

Thaddeus looked around, and above: the ſky was clear, and glittering with ſtars; the moon, ſhining on a near branch of the Ouſe, which divides Huntingdonſhire from Cambridgeſhire, lit the green heath which ſkirted its banks. He wiſhed not for a more magnificent canopy; and, placing his wallet under his head, he lay down beneath a hillock of furze and broom, and ſlept till morning.

When he awoke from a ſleep, which fatigue and faſting had rendered more oppreſſive than refreſhing, he found that the ſplendours of the night, were ſucceeded by a heavy rain, and that he was very wet. He roſe, with a ſtiffneſs in his limbs, a pain

in

in his head, and a dimness over his eyes, which almost disabled him from moving. He readily judged that he had caught cold; and every moment feeling himself grow worse, he thought it necessary to seek some house, where he might purchase rest and assistance.

To this end, leaning on his stick, but no longer able to incumber himself with even the light load of his bundle, he threw it amongst the brambles; thinking from the symptoms which he felt, that he had not many hours to endure the ills of life, he staggered a few yards farther: no habitation appeared; his limbs became more feeble, his eyes seemed totally obscured, and he sunk down on a bank. For a minute he attempted to struggle with the cold grasp of death, which he believed was fastening on his heart.

"And are my days to be so short! Are they to end thus?" thought he; "Merciful Providence, pardon my repining!"

These were the last movements of the lips

lips of Thaddeus, whilſt his blood ſeemed freezing to inſenſibility. His eyes cloſed, his head fell back; and pale and without animation, he lay at the foot of the tree near which he had dropt.

The Count remained a quarter of an hour in this death-like ſtate before he was perceived; at length a gentleman, who was paſſing that road in his way to a country ſeat in Cambridgeſhire, thought he perceived a man lying amongſt the graſs a little onward on the heath. The traveller ſtopt his carriage, and ordering one of the out-riders to alight, bade him examine whether the object he ſaw were living or dead.

The man obeyed; and preſently returning, with an affrighted countenance, informed his maſter, that it was the body of a man, who by his dreſs appeared to be a gentleman; and who, being quite ſenſeleſs, he ſuppoſed had been murdered by robbers. The features of the benevolent ſtranger inſtantly reflected the diſtreſs of his ſervant's

vant's, but ordering the chariot door to be opened, he took in his hand a bottle of drops, (which, from his own invalid ſtate, was his travelling companion,) and alighting, haſtened to the ſide of the lifeleſs Thaddeus.

By this time, all the ſervants were collected round the ſpot; and the good man himſelf, whilſt he gazed with pity on the marble features of the Count, obſerved with pleaſure, that he ſaw no marks of violence. Suppoſing that the preſent accident might have been occaſioned by a fit; and thinking it poſſible by proper means to recal life, he deſired that the unfortunate perſon's waiſtcoat might be uncloſed; and, taking off his hat he contrived to pour ſome drops into his mouth. Their warmth renewed pulſation in the heart; for one of the ſervants who was ſtooping, declared that it beat under his hand. When the benevolent gentleman was ſatisfied that this report was true, he ordered his ſervants to place the poor traveller in his carriage; having only

only another mile to go, he said he hoped that his charge might be restored at the end of their journey.

Whilst the postilions drove in full gallop towards the house, the cold face of Thaddeus rested on the bosom of the stranger, who continued to chafe his temples with lavender water, until the chariot stopped before the gates. Two men carried the Count to the house; and having left him with their master, and a medical man who resided near, other restoratives were applied, which succeeded in recovering his lost senses. When he was completely recalled to recollection, and was able to look around, and distinguish objects, he saw that he was supported by two gentlemen, and in a magnificent bed-chamber.

Gratitude, was an active virtue in the soul of Thaddeus. At the moment of his awakening from that sleep, which, when it fell upon him, he believed would last until time should be lost in eternity, — he pressed the hands of them who held his own;

not

not doubting but that they were the good Samaritans who had preſerved him from periſhing.

The younger of the gentlemen, perceiving by the animated luſtre which ſpread over his patient's eyes, that he was going to ſpeak, put his hand on his lips, and ſaid, "Pardon me, ſir! you muſt not ſpeak; Your life at preſent hangs on a thread; the ſlighteſt exertion would ſnap it: but, as all you want, is reſt and reſuſcitation, to ſupply ſome great expence, which the vital powers have ſuſtained; I muſt require you neither to ſpeak, nor be ſpoken to, until I give permiſſion. Meanwhile, be ſatisfied, ſir, that you are in the moſt honourable hands. This gentleman," added he, pointing to his friend, "ſaw you on the heath, and brought you to his houſe, where you now are."

Thaddeus bowed his head to them both in ſign of gratitude and compliance; and the elder left the room.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

NEXT morning, when the ſeal was taken off the lips of Thaddeus, he expreſſed, in the moſt animated terms, his deep ſenſe of the humanity, which actuated both the gentlemen, to take ſuch a generous intereſt in his fate.

"You owe no thanks to me," replied the one who had injoined, and releaſed him from ſilence, and who was alone with him; "I am only the agent of another. Yet, I do not deny, that in obeying the benevolent orders of Sir Robert Somerſet, I have frequent opportunities of gratifying my own heart."

Thaddeus was ſo confounded at this diſcovery, that he could not ſpeak, and the gentleman proceeded.

"I am

"I am apothecary to Sir Robert's houſe-hold; and, as my excellent maſter has been long afflicted with an ill ſtate of health, I live in a ſmall lodge at the other end of the park. He is the boaſt of the country: the beſt landlord, and the kind-eſt neighbour. All ranks of people love him; and when he dies (which his late apoplectic fits make it too probable will be ſoon), both poor and rich will loſe their friend.—Ill as he was this morning, when I told him that you were out of danger, he expreſſed a pleaſure, which did more good to him that all my medi-cines."

Thaddeus, not conſidering the wildneſs of the queſtion, haſtily demanded, "Does he know who I am?"

The honeſt apothecary ſtared at the look, and tone of voice, with which theſe words were delivered, and then replied, "No; is there any reaſon, ſir, to make you wiſh that he ſhould not?"

"Certainly none:" replied Thaddeus,

recollecting himself, and sighing; "and I shall be impatient, until I have an opportunity of telling him, how grateful I am for the goodness which he has shewn to me as a stranger."

The apothecary, surprised at these hints, (which the Count, not considering their tendency, allowed to escape him,) gathered sufficient from them, united with the speaker's superior mien, to make him suppose that his patient was some emigrant of quality, whom Sir Robert would rejoice in having served. These surmises, and conclusions having passed very quickly through the honest gentleman's brain, he bowed his head, with that respect, which the generous mind is proud to pay to nobility in ruins, and resumed:

"Whatever you may be, sir, a peasant or a prince, you will meet with British hospitality from the noble owner of this house. The magnificence of his spirit is equalled by the goodness of his heart; and Deerhurst will afford every comfort

to you, that benevolence and wealth can beſtow; and I am certain, that Sir Robert will conſider the dreadful apoplexy, which brought him from Somerſet for change of air, rather fortunate, than otherwiſe, as it has afforded him an opportunity of ſerving, and of knowing you."

Thaddeus bluſhed at the ſtrain of this ſpeech; and, readily underſtanding what was paſſing in the mind of the apothecary, hardly knew how to reply. He pauſed for a moment, and then ſaid, "All you have declared, ſir, in praiſe of Sir Robert Somerſet, I cannot have a doubt of his deſerving. I have already felt the effects of his humanity, and ſhall ever remember that my life was prolonged by his means; but I have no pretenſions to the honour of his acquaintance. I only wiſh to ſee him, that I may thank him for what he has done; therefore, if you will permit me to riſe this evening, inſtead of to-morrow morning, you will oblige me."

To this requeſt, the apothecary gave a

reſpectful, yet firm denial; and went down ſtairs, to communicate his obſervations to his patron.

The anxiety which agitated the Count's mind, when he reflected, that he was receiving theſe obligations from his moſt implacable enemy, ſo occupied and diſturbed him, that he ſpent a ſleepleſs night. The dawn found his fever much augmented; but no corporeal ſufferings could perſuade him to abandon the reſolution of ſeeing the Baronet; and immediately leaving his houſe; believing, as he did, that all his kindneſs would have been withheld, had his hoſt known on whom he was pouring ſuch benefits, he thought that every minute which paſſed over him, while he was under Sir Robert's roof, inflicted a new outrage on his dignity and honour.

To this end then, as ſoon as Mr. Middleton the apothecary retired to breakfaſt, Thaddeus roſe from his bed, and was completely dreſſed before he returned.

The

The good man expoſtulated on the raſhneſs of what he had done, and augured no leſs than a relapſe from the morning ſymptoms of his patient. Thaddeus once in his life was obſtinate, though civilly ſo; and deſiring a ſervant to requeſt that Sir Robert would indulge him with an audience for a few minutes alone in his library, he ſoon convinced Mr. Middleton, that his purpoſe was not to be ſhaken.

The Baronet returning his compliments, that he ſhould be happy to ſee his gueſt, the ſtill anxious apothecary offered him his aſſiſtance down the ſtairs. Thaddeus needed no help, and gratefully declined it. The exertion neceſſary to be ſummoned for this interview, imparted as much momentary ſtrength to his frame as to his mind, and though his colour was heightened, he entered the library with a firm ſtep.

Sir Robert met him at the door, and, ſhaking him by the hand, with many warm aſſurances of pleaſure at his recovery,

would have led him to a ſeat; but Thaddeus drawing back, only ſupported himſelf againſt the back of it with his hand; whilſt in a ſteady voice, he expreſſed the moſt animated thanks for the benefits he had received; then pauſing and caſting the proud luſtre of his eyes to the ground, leſt their language ſhould tell all that he thought, he continued, "I have only to regret, Sir Robert, that your benevolence has been laviſhed on a man whom you regard with abhorrence. I am the Count Sobieſki, that Polander, whom you commanded your ſon to ſee no more. Reſpecting, even the prejudices of my friend's parent, I was haſtening to London, meaning to ſet ſail for America with the firſt ſhip, when I ſwooned on the road. I believe I was expiring: your humanity ſaved me: and I now owe to gratitude, as well as to my own ſatisfaction, the fulfilment of my declaration. I ſhall leave Deerhurſt immediately, and England, as ſoon as I am able to embark."

Thaddeus,

Thaddeus, with a ſecond bow, and not quite ſo firm a ſtep, without venturing a glance, at what he ſuppoſed were the abaſhed looks of the Baronet, was preparing to quit the room, when Sir Robert, with a pale and aghaſt countenance, exclaimed, "Stop!"

Thaddeus looked round, and regarded him with wonder. The Baronet, incapable of ſaying more, pointed to a chair for him to ſit down; then ſinking into another himſelf, took out his handkerchief, and wiping away the large drops, which ſtood on his forehead, panted for reſpiration. At laſt, with a deſperate kind of haſte, he ſaid:

"Was your mother, indeed, Thereſe Sobieſki?"

Thaddeus, ſtill more aſtoniſhed, replied in the affirmative; and Sir Robert threw himſelf back on the chair with a deep groan. Hardly knowing what he did, the Count roſe from his ſeat, and advanced towards him: Sir Robert, hearing his ap-

proach, ſtretched out his hand, and, with a look and tone of agony, ſaid—"Who was your father?" and then, without waiting for a reply, covered his convulſed features with his handkerchief.—The Baronet's agitation, which now ſhook him like an earthquake, became contagious: Thaddeus gazed at him with a palſying uncertainty in his heart; and laying his hand on his bewildered brain, he anſwered, "I know not. I believe the Earl of Tynemouth. But here is his picture. With a trembling hand he took the caſe which held it, out of his pocket; and, tearing open the claſps, gave it to Sir Robert, who had ſtarted from his ſeat at the name of the Earl. The moment the Baronet's eyes reſted on the miniature, he threw it from him, and fell ſenſeleſs upon the chair.

Thaddeus, hardly more alive, ſprinkled ſome water on his face, and with throbbing temples and a beating heart, ſtood in wordleſs expectation over him. Such exceſſive emotion told him, that ſomething more

more than Sir Robert's hatred of the Polanders had ſtimulated his late conduct; and too earneſt for an explanation, to ring for aſſiſtance, he rejoiced to ſee, by the convulſion of the Baronet's features, and the heaving of his cheſt, that animation was returning. In a few minutes he opened his eyes, but when he met the anxious gaze of Thaddeus, he cloſed them as ſuddenly, and riſing from his ſeat, ſtaggered againſt the chimney-piece, exclaiming, "O God, direct me."

Thaddeus, whoſe conjectures were now wrought almoſt to wildneſs, followed him, and whilſt his exhauſted frame was ready to ſink to the earth, implored him to ſpeak.

"O, Sir," cried he, "if you know any thing about my family? If you know any thing about my father, in pity anſwer me! Or, only tell me: am I ſo wretched as to be the ſon of Lord Tynemouth?"

The violence of the Count's emotions, during this agonizing petition, totally

overcame him; before he finiſhed ſpeaking, his limbs withdrew their ſupport; and, ſinking down on his knees, his head dropped breathleſs againſt the ſide of a chair: Though incapable of ſtanding, his beſeeching and eager eyes were yet rivetted on the Baronet's averted face.

Sir Robert turned haſtily round. He ſaw him ſunk, like a beautiful flower, bruiſed and trampled on, by the wanton foot of him who had given it root: unable to make any evaſive reply, to this laſt appeal of virtue and of nature, he threw himſelf with a burſt of tears upon his neck, and exclaimed, "Wretch that I have been! O, Sobieſki! *I* am thy father. Dear, injured ſon of the unhappy Thereſe!"

The firſt words which carried this avowal to the heart of Thaddeus, deprived it of motion; and, when Sir Robert expected to receive the returning embrace of his ſon, he found him ſenſeleſs in his arms.

The cries of the Baronet brought Mr. Middleton and the ſervants into the room. When

When the former ſaw the ſtate of the Count, and perceived the agonized poſition of his patron, (who was ſupporting and leaning over his ſon,) the honeſt man declared, that he expected nothing leſs from the gentleman's diſobedience of his orders. The preſence of the ſervants having recalled Sir Robert's wandering faculties, he deſired them to remove Thaddeus to his chamber. Then following them in ſilence when they had laid their charge on the bed, he watched, in extreme but concealed anxiety, until Mr. Middleton, by opening a vein, again brought animation to his patient.

The moment the Count uncloſed his eyes, they fixed themſelves on his agitated father. He drew the hand which held his, to his lips. The tears of paternal love again bathed the cheeks of Sir Robert; he felt how warm at his heart was the affection of his deſerted ſon; (and making a ſign for Mr. Middleton to leave the room, who obeyed;) he bent his ſtreaming eyes

upon the other hand of Thaddeus, and ſaid in a faultering voice, "Can you pardon me?"

Thaddeus threw himſelf on his father's boſom, and wept profuſely; then raiſing Sir Robert's claſped hands in his, whilſt his eloquent eyes ſeemed to ſearch the Heavens, he ſaid, "My dear, dear mother loved you to her lateſt hour, and I have all my mother's heart: whatever may have been your faults, I love my father."

Sir Robert ſtrained him to his breaſt. After a pauſe, whilſt he ſhook the tears from his ſilver eye-laſhes, he reſumed. "Certain, my dear ſon, that you require repoſe, and aſſured that you will not find it, until I have offered ſome apology for my unnatural conduct, I will now explain the various circumſtances which impelled my actions, and drew diſtreſs upon that noble creature, your mother."

Sir Robert heſitated a moment to recover breath and then went on.

"Keep your ſituation;" added he, putting

ting down Thaddeus, who at this opening was raiſing himſelf: "I ſhall tell my melancholy ſtory with leſs pain, if your eyes be not upon me. I will begin from the firſt."

The Baronet proceeded to ſay, "That very early in life he attached himſelf to Miſs Beaufort, the only ſiſter of the late Admiral Beaufort, who was Mary's father; they were then wards of Sir Fulke Somerſet. Mr. Beaufort had been in the navy from a boy; but his ſiſter remaining always at the Caſtle, an affection as ſtrong as it was mutual took place between herſelf and her couſin Robert. When the young people applied to Sir Fulke for his conſent to their marriage, he refuſed it on the plea of their youth. In vain the paſſionate Robert declared the reaſonableneſs, and ardour of his affection; his father urged his being only a younger ſon; and, indeed that he was totally unworthy of his ward, unleſs he would conſent to undergo the poliſh of a three years tour over the Continent,

Continent. After much altercation, this arrangement was complied with; and Robert and Miſs Beaufort bade each other a melancholy adieu. Indignant at the unfeeling whim of Sir Fulke; and provoked with his elder brother, for ſeconding his father's argument, Robert Somerſet ſet off for Dover, where he was joined by the preſent Earl of Tynemouth, (then Mr. Stanhope,) who was baniſhed the country on a ſimilar errand: but his was to forget a miſtreſs; Somerſet's to deſerve one. Stanhope's mother and Robert's having been ſiſters, the young men met as relations; mutually enraged at their fathers, (their mothers having been long dead,) they determined to change their names, and to let no one know any thing about them during their travels, except the two women who they beſt loved. To this end, as ſoon as they croſſed the Channel, and landed in France, they gave themſelves out to be brothers; which their great perſonal reſemblance corroborated, and called themſelves Sackville.

ville. This buſineſs ſettled, they travelled pretty amicably until they reached Naples: Here Mr. Stanhope involved himſelf in a very diſhonourable intrigue, with the only daughter of an old Britiſh officer, who had retired to that climate for his health. Somerſet remonſtrated on the villainy of ſeducing an innocent girl, when he knew that his heart and hand were abſolutely devoted to another; and Stanhope, enraged at finding a cenſor in a companion, whom he conſidered as headſtrong as himſelf, ended the argument by ſtriking him. Somerſet drew his ſword; and it is likely, if the ſervants of the hotel had not interfered, the affray would have terminated with one of their lives. Since that hour, they never met again. Mr. Stanhope left his ſhame, and his bleeding friend; and fearful of conſequences, fled to Palermo. Robert Somerſet, when recovered from his wounds, (ſtill retaining the name of Sackville,) took the way to Florence; in which

beautiful

beautiful city, determining to ſtay ſome time, he rather ſought than repelled the civilities of the inhabitants. Here he became acquainted with the Palatine, and the lovely Thereſe, whoſe affections he ſo completely won. Soon after this intimacy commenced, Miſs Beaufort ceaſed to anſwer his letters. Deſperate with jealouſy, he was on the point of going to England, when he received a packet from home. On opening it, he found a letter from Miſs Beaufort, in which ſhe informed him, that having long conſidered their attachment, as a childiſh entanglement, ſhe had tried to wean him from his former folly, by an obſtinate ſilence. Having hardly a doubt that ſhe had ſucceeded, ſhe now broke through her reſolution, as it was to ſhew him at once, the unreaſonableneſs of making ſuch early engagements. Soon after his departure, a journey up to town taught her to know her own heart; and in conſequence ſhe had yielded her hand to Mr. Somerſet,

his elder brother; who had always been averſe to her marriage with Robert. This ſhameleſs declaration, concluded with a long homily of advice againſt ſimilar fetters——and the inſult of ſubſcribing herſelf his "affectionate ſiſter," &c. Having read the letter to the end, he forſwore his family for ever, and flying to Thereſe Sobieſki, in a paroxyſm of madneſs and revenge, married her. This raſh act perpetrated, he in vain ſought for tranquillity; he ſaw that ſhe idolized him, but his thoughts were always fixed on his ungrateful Mary; were always deploring her lightneſs, and execrating the perfidy of his brother. In this temper a ſecond packet found him. Again he ſaw Miſs Beaufort's hand-writing, but he dropt it with horror into the envelope, and tore open the black ſeal which was affixed to a letter from his father. Here Sir Fulke confeſſed ſuch a plan of deceit as petrified his ſon. He declared, that all which had paſſed, was deviſed by Mr. Somerſet,

in

in hopes of tempting him to revenge the affront which Mary had put upon him, by a haſty marriage. The wretched old man, with many prayers for pardon, acknowledged that this bitter confeſſion was wrung from him by the ſudden death of his eldeſt ſon, who now lay a corpſe in the houſe. The diſconſolate father having related the particulars of Mr. Somerſet's death, (which happened after three days illneſs,) added, it was in compliance with his entreaties to preſerve Miſs Beaufort for him, that he had agreed to drive Robert from the kingdom. To further the ſcheme, of making the ſeparation be for ever, he had intercepted all their mutual letters; and, Mr. Somerſet himſelf, had forged that one in Miſs Beaufort's name, which carried the intelligence of their union. By the ſame means, a ſimilar effect was wrought upon the abuſed Mary; believing Robert unfaithful, ſhe fell into a melancholy, and evinced a careleſſneſs to exterior objects, which they hoped might, in time, induce her,

her, through mere weakneſs of mind, to give her hand to the perſecuting paſſion of Mr. Somerſet. "But," continued Sir Fulke, "death has put an end to this unnatural rivalry; and my poor girl, undeceived, in her opinion of you, pants to ſee you, and to give you that hand, which my ill-fated ſon, and your unhappy father, ſo unjuſtly detained."

On the receipt of this packet, with a ſoul divided between love, humanity, and honour, Robert Somerſet ſacrificed all to his paſſions. He adored the woman on whoſe account he had left his country; and, though every tie of Heaven and earth bound him to his deceived and injured wife, he conſigned her to the full horrors of ſuch deſertion, and haſtened to England.

"Shameful to relate," added Sir Robert, "immediately on my landing I married Mary Beaufort. In her arms I forgot for a while, Thereſe and her agonies. But when my dear Pembroke firſt ſaw the light,

when

when I preſt him to my heart, it ſeemed as if at the ſame inſtant I ſtabbed it with a dagger. When I would have breathed a bleſſing over him, the conviction ſtruck me, that I durſt not; that I had deluded the mother who gave him birth; and that at ſome future period, he might have cauſe to curſe the author of his exiſtence. Well," continued the Baronet, wiping his forehead, "though the birth of this boy conjured up the image of your mother, which haunted me day and night; I never could ſummon courage to inquire reſpecting her fate. When the troubles of Poland commenced, what a dreadful terror ſeized me! The ſucceſs of the Ruſſians, and the conſequent diſtreſſes of the nobility, overwhelmed me with fear: I knew not, but they might be forced, like the French nobleſſe, to fly their country; and the bare idea of meeting your grandfather, or the injured Thereſe, in England, precipitated me into ſuch a ſeries of apprehenſions, as menaced my life. I became melancholy and ill;

I avoided

I avoided the ſight of the newſpapers; and, as far as I could, (under the plea of the ſtory which you have heard,) I withheld my family from ſpeaking on a ſubject which manifeſtly gave me pain. But I could not prevent the tongues of our viſitors from diſcourſing on a theme, which at that period, intereſted every thinking mind. I heard of the valiant Koſciuſzko, the good Staniſlaus, and the Palatine Sobieſki with his brave grandſon, ſpoken of in the ſame breath. I durſt not ſurmiſe who this grandſon was: I durſt not aſk; I dreaded to know. At length," added he, quickening his voice, "the idol of my heart, ſhe for whom I had perhaps ſacrificed my eternal peace, died in my arms! I received the ſhock as became a Chriſtian; I bent beneath the blow with humility; for I embraced it as the expiation of a crime, which, till then, even in the midſt of my felicity, ſat on my ſoul like the hand of death. I bore this trial with reſignation. But, when two years afterwards,

wards, my eye fell, by accident, upon the name of Sobieſki, in one of the public papers, I could not withdraw it; my ſight was faſcinated as if by a rattleſnake; and, in one column I read, how bravely the Palatine fell; and, in the next, the dreadful fate of his daughter. She was revenged!" cried Sir Robert, eagerly graſping the hand of Thaddeus, who could not reſtrain the groan which burſt from his breaſt. "I was deprived of that reaſon which had abuſed her noble nature, for near three months afterwards. When I recovered my ſenſes," continued he, after a pauſe, "and found that I had ſo fatally ſuffered the time of reſtitution to go by, I began to torment myſelf, that I had not, on the death of Lady Somerſet, haſtened to Poland, and intreated Thereſe's pardon on my knees. This period of vivid remorſe was ſoon terminated, by the ſame arguments, which, on the firſt year of my wife's loſs, deterred me from being juſt. I reconſidered, that the Counteſs Sobieſki

having

having poſſeſſed a prior claim to my name, ſuch reſtitution on my part, muſt, in conſequence, have illegitimized my darling Pembroke. It was this horrid conviction," exclaimed Sir Robert, a ſudden diſtraction agitating his before affectionate eye, "that cauſed all my cruelty to you. When my dear ſon deſcribed the danger from which you had reſcued him; when he told me, that Thereſe had foſtered him with a mother's tenderneſs; I was probed to the heart: but when he added, that the young Count Sobieſki was now an alien from his country, and relying on my friendſhip for a home, my terror was too truly manifeſted. Horror drove all natural remorſe from my ſoul. I thought an avenging power had ſent my deſerted child to diſcover his father, to claim his rights, and to publiſh me as a villain: and when I ſaw my innocent ſon, even on his knees, petitioning for the man, who I believed, was come to undo him, I became almoſt frantic. Under this temper," added he, putting

ting the trembling hand of Thaddeus to his ſtreaming eyes, "I drove out my firſt born, to be a guiltleſs wanderer on the face of the earth; not for his own crimes, but for thoſe of his father: and heaven puniſhed my injuſtice. When I thought that the evidence of my ſhame, was divided from me by an inſuperable barrier; when I believed that the ocean would ſoon ſeparate me from all my fears, a righteous Providence brought thee before me, forlorn and expiring. It was the ſon of Thereſe Sobeiſki, that I had expoſed to ſuch wretchedneſs! It was the darling of her heart, that I had conſigned to the beating elements! O, Thaddeus," cried he, "can I be forgiven for all this?"

Thaddeus lulled the wakeful remorſe of his venerable father, with ſuch kind arguments of excuſe for his conduct, as at leaſt imparted to him, a conſoling aſſurance in the generous affection of his ſon.

When this long and intereſting converſation terminated, Sir Robert, well remembering

membering the violent effects of Mr. Somerſet's grief, at Sobieſki's flight and declared abjuration of England, pardoned his ſon the outrageous reproaches which had driven him from his own houſe, and very joyfully diſpatched a meſſenger to deſire his preſence at Deerhurſt.

CHAP. VIII.

THAT ſickneſs, which is the conſequence of mental pain, uſually vaniſhes with its cauſe. Long before the evening of the enſuing day, Thaddeus quitted his chamber, and related to his father the rapid incidents of his brief and eventful career. The voice of fame had blazoned him abroad, as "*the plume of war, with early laurels crowned;*" but it was left to his own eloquent tongue, to prove, with all the pathos of modeſty and feeling, that the moſt deſperate conflicts are not thoſe which we ſuſtain in the field.

Sir Robert liſtened to him with affection, admiration, and delight. He was anſwering the intereſting detail, with many grateful apoſtrophes to that Providence, which had crowned

crowned his old age with pardon and peace, when the servant opened the door, and announced, that Mr. Somerset was in the library.

Thaddeus instantly rose; but Sir Robert put him down again. "Remain here, my dear son," said he, "until I apprise your brother how nearly you are related to him. That door leads into my study; I will call you when he is prepared."

The moment Sir Robert joined Pembroke, he read in his pale and harassed countenance, how much he required the intelligence which he came to communicate. Mr. Somerset bowed coldly on his father's entrance, and begged to be honoured with his commands.

"They are, what I expect will restore to you, your usual looks and manner, my dear boy," answered his father, taking his passive hand, and seating him by him; "so attend to me."

Pembroke listened to the beginning of the Baronet's narrative with respectful at-

tention; but when the name of Thereſe Sobieſki was mentioned as the woman whom he had married and deſerted; the ready apprehenſion of his ſon conceiving the reſt, he had only to affirm his eager demand, that Thaddeus was indeed his brother. Pembroke looked wildly around him.

"O, my father!" cried he, "what have you done? Where is he? For what have you ſacrificed him?"

"Hear me to an end," rejoined the Baronet, who, then, in as few words as poſſible, repeated the conſequent events, with the recent meeting.

Pembroke's raptures were now as high as his deſpair had been deep. He threw himſelf on his father's breaſt; he aſked for his friend, his brother; and begged to be conducted to him. Sir Robert did no more than open the door which divided the library from the dining-room, and in one moment the brothers were locked in each other's arms.

Their father, with a ſpeechleſs tongue,

but

but an eloquent heart, ſtood over them with uplifted hands, invoking the ſpirits of their beatified mothers, to behold this heavenly ſcene.

The tranſports of the young men for a long time denied them words, but their eyes, their tears, and their united hands, imparted to each breaſt a conſciouſneſs of mutual love, unutterable, if not to be expreſſed by thoſe looks, which are indeed the true heralds of the ſoul.

Sir Robert wept like an infant whilſt contemplating theſe two affectionate brothers; in a faultering voice he exclaimed, "How ſoon may theſe plighted hands be ſeparated by the harpies of the law! Alas, Pembroke, you cannot be ignorant that I buy this ſon at the price of your legitimacy!"

At this ſpeech, the blood ruſhed over the cheek of the ingenuous Pembroke; but Thaddeus turning inſtantly to Sir Robert, ſaid, with a ſmile,

"On this head, I truſt that neither my father nor my brother will entertain one thought to trouble them. Had I even the inclination to act otherwiſe than right, my revered grandfather has put it out of my power to bear any other name than that of Sobieſki. He made me ſwear never to change it; and, as I hope to meet him hereafter," added he, with ſolemnity, "I will obey him! Therefore my beloved father, in ſecret only, can I enjoy the conviction that I am your ſon, and Pembroke's brother: yet, the happineſs I receive with the knowledge of being ſo, will ever live here; will ever animate my heart with gratitude to Heaven and you."

"Noble ſon of the ſainted Thereſe!" cried Sir Robert, "I do not deſerve thee!"

"How ſhall I merit your care of my honour! of my deareſt feelings?" exclaimed Pembroke, preſſing the hands of his brother to his heart, "I can do nothing, deareſt Thaddeus. I am a bankrupt in the means of evincing what is paſſing in my ſoul. My

mother's chaſte ſpirit thanks you from my lips; yet I will not abuſe your generoſity; though I retain the name of Somerſet, it ſhall only be the name; the inheritance entailed on my father's eldeſt ſon belongs to you."

Whilſt Thaddeus embraced his brother with affection, he calmly and firmly replied, that he would rather encounter all the probable miſeries, from which his father's benevolence had ſaved him, than rob his brother of any part of what he believed to be juſtly his due.

Sir Robert, with hatred of himſelf, and admiration of his ſons, attempted to ſtop this generous contention, by ſaying, that ſhould be determined by an equal diviſion of his eſtates.

"Not ſo, my dear father," replied Thaddeus; "I will never conſent that the title of Somerſet ſhall want wealth to ſupport the munificence of its poſſeſſor."

After a few more arguments, of the ſame tendency, the controverſy was ſettled;

and the remainder of the evening paſſed in that ſweet reciprocity of confidence and bliſs, which the imagination can beſt picture.

According to the deciſions of this night, Sir Robert wrote next morning to his ſiſter, informing her, that accident had introduced Pembroke's friend, the Count Sobieſki, to his preſence; when, to his amazement and joy, he diſcovered, that this celebrated young hero, though of a nation to which he had declared an abhorrence, was the only remaining branch of a family to which he owed unnumbered obligations. He added, that five-and-twenty years ago, having contracted an immenſe debt with the Palatine of Maſovia, — as a ſmall compenſation, he now ſigned over to the Count, (who would reſume all the diſtinctions of his rank,) the houſe and eſtates of Deerhurſt, to the amount of three thouſand a year. He told her, that Pembroke did not deem ſuch ſubtraction from the rent-roll

of

of Somerſet, any loſs; for twelve thouſand annually, would yet remain; and could his wiſhes have been complied with, he would have divided his whole patrimony with his friend. He cloſed his letter, with many expreſſions of impatience, to preſent to his ſiſter and niece, their intereſting *emigrè* under a character which reflected honour on their diſcernment.

This epiſtle was put into the hands of Mrs. Dorothy, by a courier, as ſhe was following Miſs Beaufort and Lady Albina Stanhope into the travelling coach. Mrs. Dorothy having ſeated herſelf, read it aloud to both the young ladies; at every welcome word, the heart of the amazed and overjoyed Mary throbbed with exultation, hope, and gratitude. The good old lady was not backward in demonſtrating aſtoniſhment. Surpriſed at her brother's rencontre with Thaddeus, but more at his avowal of obligations to any of that nation, about which he always had aſſerted directly

the reverſe; ſhe was ſo wrapped in wonder and pleaſure, that her ever-cheerful tongue, lightened her happy heart, by relating to the attentive Lady Albina, the public, as well as private hiſtory, of the Count Sobieſki.

When the carriage arrived at Deerhurſt, it was paſt midnight; and, to the no ſmall diſappointment of the ladies, the family were retired to bed. Mrs. Dorothy, who would not ſuffer her brother to be diſturbed, ſent the girls to their rooms; and was croſſing one of the galleries to her own apartment, when a door opening, Pembroke, in his night-gown and ſlippers, looked out. Having heard a buſtle in the houſe, he was going to inquire the reaſon, juſt as his aunt appeared. She kiſſed him, bade him good night, told him to prepare for ſomething pleaſing in the morning; and, ſmiling, hurried to her chamber.

Pembroke thought ſo little of Mrs. Dorothy's lively promiſe, that he was almoſt the laſt

laſt who deſcended to the breakfaſt-parlour. Mrs. Dorothy reproached him for his undutiful lazineſs; while Miſs Beaufort, with a glowing cheek, embraced her couſin, who whiſpered, "Now, I ſhall ſee the two deareſt friends I poſſeſs, happy in each other."

Mary's vivid bluſh had not ſubſided, when the ſudden entrance of Thaddeus, and his agitated bow, overſpread her neck and boſom with crimſon. A dimneſs obſcured her faculties; ſhe hardly heard the animated words of Sir Robert, whilſt he preſented him as the Count Sobieſki, the darling ſon of one who had deſerved the higheſt place in his heart. Whatever he was, ſhe was conſcious that he was lord of her's; and withdrawing her hand haſtily, from the timid and thrilling touch of him ſhe would have lingered near for ever, ſhe glided back towards an open caſement, where the freſh air helped to diſpel the faintneſs which ſeized her.

After Mrs. Dorothy, with all the urbanity of her nature, had declared her welcomes to the Count, she put away the coffee that was handed to her by Pembroke, and said, with a smile, "Before I taste my breakfast, I must inform you, Sir Robert, that you have a guest in this house whom you little expect. I forbade Miss Beaufort saying a word, because, as we are told that '*the first tellers of unwelcome news have but a losing office*;' *vice versa*, I hoped for a *gaining* one; therefore detained such a pleasing piece of intelligence for my own promulgation. Indeed, I doubt, whether it will not intoxicate some folks here!" — added she, glancing archly on Pembroke, who looked suddenly round at this whimsical declaration: "Suffice it to say, that yesterday morning, Lady Albina Stanhope, more dead than alive, accompanied by her maid, arrived in a post-chaise at Somerset-Castle, and implored my protection. Our dear Mary embraced the poor weep-

ing young creature, who, amidſt many tears, recapitulated the injuries which ſhe had ſuffered, ſince ſhe parted with the Count Sobieſki at the Abbey. The lateſt outrage of her cruel father, was his immediate marriage with the vile Lady Sophia Lovel; and his commands, that Lady Albina would treat her as became a daughter. Ill as her ladyſhip was, when ſhe received theſe diſgraceful orders, ſhe determined to eſcape them, and the degradation they would otherwiſe caſt on the memory of her own mother, by inſtantly quitting the houſe. To this end, ſhe engaged her maid to aſſiſt her flight; '*and*,' added ſhe, '*whither could I go? Who would receive the unfortunate victim of the profligate Lady Sophia? I could think of none ſo likely as the father of the generous Mr. Somerſet. He told me we were relations; I beſeech you to be my friends!*' "Certain of your benevolence, my dear brother," continued Mrs. Dorothy, "I ſtopped this ſweet girl's petition,

tion, with my careſſes, and promiſed her a kinder father in Sir Robert Somerſet."

"You did right, Dorothy," returned the Baronet, "though the Earl and I muſt ever be ſtrangers, I have no enmity againſt his children. Where is this amiable Lady Albina?"

Mrs. Dorothy informed him, that in conſequence of her recent grief and ill-treatment, her ladyſhip found herſelf too unwell to riſe with the family; but that ſhe hoped to join them at noon.

Pembroke was, indeed, deeply intereſted in this intelligence. The ſimple graces of the lovely Albina, on the firſt interview, had penetrated his heart. Her ſufferings at Harrowby, and the ſenſibility which her ingenuous nature exhibited without affectation or diſguiſe, had left her image in his ſoul, long after ſhe diſappeared. He now gave the reins to his eager imagination, and was the firſt in the ſaloon to greet his lovely miſtreſs.

Sir Robert Somerſet welcomed her with the

the warmth of a parent: but his animated and enraptured ſon, broke out into the moſt vehement expreſſions of joy, which ſhe received with timid and grateful bows.

During this ſcene, Miſs Beaufort, no longer able to bear the reſtraint of company, nor even the accidental glances of Sobieſki, (whoſe preſence, dear as it was, diſconcerted and oppreſſed her,) walked out into the park. Though it was the month of October, the weather continued fine. A bright ſun tempered the air, and gilded the yellow leaves, which the freſh wind drove before her in a thouſand glittering eddies. This was Mary's favourite ſeaſon. She found its ſoftneſs diffuſe the tendereſt melancholy through her ſoul. The rugged form of Care, ſeems to diſſolve under the magic touch of beautiful Nature. Forgetful of the world's anxieties, the tranquillizing ſpirit of meditation ſhades the heart of ſorrow with a veil, which might well be called the twilight of the mind; and the entranced ſoul, happy in deluſion,

ſion, half cloſes its bright eye, reluctant to perceive that ſuch ſweet repoſe reſts in error.

Such were the reflections of Miſs Beaufort, after her diſturbed thoughts had toſſed themſelves in a ſea of doubts, relative to the intereſt which ſhe might probably poſſeſs in the heart of Sobieſki. Wearied out with ſuſpenſe, ſhe reſolved to reſign her future fate to Providence; and, turning her gaze on the lovely objects around, ſoon found the genius of the ſeaſon abſorb her wholly. Her cheeks glowed, her eyes became humid, and caſting their mild radiance on the fading flowers beneath, ſhe purſued her way through a cloud of fragrance. It was the laſt breath of the expiring year. Love is full of imagination. Mary eaſily glided from the earth's departing charms to her own waning beauty: the chord once touched, every note reſibrated: and hope and fear, joy and regret, again diſpoſſeſſed her late acquired ſerenity.

It

"It being almoſt three o'clock, Lady Albina having expreſſed a wiſh to walk out in ſearch of Miſs Beaufort, the two brothers offered their attendance. Before her ladyſhip had paſſed through the firſt park, ſhe complained of fatigue; Pembroke, alarmed, urged her to enter a ſhepherd's hut, cloſe by, whilſt the Count Sobieſki would proceed alone in queſt of his couſin.

Thaddeus, with a beating heart, undertook this commiſſion; and bounding over the ruſtic bridge, which croſſes the Witham, haſtened along the neareſt dell. With the lightneſs of a young hunter, he mounted the heights, deſcended to the vallies, traverſed one woody nook, and then another, but could ſee no trace of Miſs Beaufort. Induced to ſuppoſe that ſhe had returned to the houſe, he was ſlackening his pace, to abandon the ſearch, when he caught a glimpſe of her figure, as ſhe turned the corner of a thicket leading to the terrace above. In an inſtant

he

he was at her side; and with his hat in his hand, and a glowing cheek, he repeated his errand.

Mary blushed, faultered, and was alarmed at finding herself alone with Thaddeus. Though he now stood before her in a quality, which she ever believed was his right, yet remembrance of what had passed between them, when in other circumstances, confounded and overwhelmed her. When Constantine was poor and unfriended, it was delicious to pity and to love him. When the same Constantine appeared as a man of rank, invested with a splendid fortune, and extensive fame, she was lost, annihilated. The cloud which had obscured, not extinguished his glory, was dispersed. He was that Sobieski whom she had admired unseen; he was that Constantine whom she had loved unknown; he was that Sobieski, that Constantine, who, seen and known, she now adored.

Weighed down by the weight of these reflections,

reflections, she only bowed to what he said; and gathering her cloak from the winds, which blew it around her, was hurrying, with downward eyes, to the stairs of the terrace, when her foot slipping, she must have fallen, had not Thaddeus caught her on his arm. She rose from it with a face blushing like scarlet; and that colour did not recede, when she found that he had not relinquished her hand. Her heart beat violently, her head became giddy, her feet trembled; and finding that, after a slight motion of her arm he still held it fast, nearly overcome by inexplicable distress, she turned away her face to conceal its confusion.

Thaddeus saw all this, and, with a fluttering hope, instead of surrendering the hand he had retained, he made it a yet closer prisoner, by grasping it in both his; and, pressing it earnestly to his breast, said, in a hurried voice, whilst his eloquent eyes poured all their beams upon her averted cheek, "Surely, Miss Beaufort will

will not deny me the deareſt happineſs I poſſeſs? The privilege of being grateful to her."

He pauſed: his ſoul was too full for utterance; and raiſing Mary's hand from his heart to his lips, he kiſſed it fervently. Almoſt fainting, Miſs Beaufort leaned her head, which ſhe was now unable to ſupport, againſt a tree of the thicket where they were ſtanding, and waved her other hand, in ſign for him to leave her.

Such extraordinary agitation palſied the warm and bliſsful emotions of the Count. Dreading that he had offended her, that ſhe might ſuppoſe he preſumed on her kindneſs, he ſtood, for a moment, in ſilent aſtoniſhment; then, dropping on his knee, (hardly conſcious of doing ſo,) with an energy of action and voice, declarative of all the impetuous paſſion, which he had ſo long ſmothered in his heart, he implored her pardon for what had paſſed.

"Forgive me," added he, with increaſed earneſtneſs; "forgive me, in juſtice to your own

own virtues. I meant only to thank you for your goodneſs to an unfortunate exile; but if my words or manner have obeyed the more fervid impulſe of my ſoul, and declared aloud, what is its glory in ſecret, blame my nature, moſt reſpected Miſs Beaufort, not my preſumption. I have not dared to look ſteadily on any aim, higher than your eſteem."

Mary knew not how to receive this addreſs. The poſition in which he uttered it, his countenance, when ſhe turned to anſwer him, were both demonſtrative of ſomething leſs equivocal than his ſpeech. He was ſtill graſping the drapery of her cloak: and his eyes, from which the wind blew back his fine hair, were beaming upon her, full of that piercing tenderneſs, which at once diſſolves and ſeizes the ſoul.

She paſſed her hand over her eyes. Her ſoul was in tumults. She too fondly wiſhed to believe that he loved her, to truſt the evidence of what ſhe ſaw. His words were ambigu-

ambiguous, and that was sufficient to fill her with uncertainty. Jealous of that delicacy, which is the parent of the purest love, and its best preserver, she assumed a coldness, which was foreign to her heart, and whilst her concealed face streamed with tears, conjured him to rise. Instinctively she held out her hand to assist him. He obeyed: and hardly conscious of what she said, she continued:

"You have done nothing, my Lord, to offend me. I was fearful of my own conduct — that you might have supposed — I mean, unfortunate appearances might lead you to imagine, that I was influenced — was so forgetful of myself ——"

"Cease, Madam! Cease, for pity's sake!" cried Thaddeus, starting back, and dropping her hand. Every emotion which faultered on her tongue, had met an answering pang in his breast.

Fearing that he had set his heart on the possession of a treasure totally out of his reach, he knew not how high had been his hope,

hope, until he felt the depth of his disappointment. Taking up his hat, which lay on the grass, with a countenance, from which every gleam of joy was banished, he bowed respectfully, and, in a lowered tone, continued—"the dependent situation in which I appeared at Lady Dundas's, being ever before my eyes, I was not so absurd as to suppose, that any lady could then notice me from any other sentiment than humanity. That I excited this humanity, where alone I was proud to awaken it, was, in those hours of dejection, my sole comfort. It consoled me for the friends I had lost; it repaid me for the honours which were no more. But that is past! Seeing no farther cause for compassion, you deem the delusion no longer necessary. Since you will not allow me an individual distinction in having attracted your benevolence, though I am to ascribe it all to a charity as diffused as effective, yet, I must ever acknowledge with the deepest gratitude, that I owe my present

preſent home and happineſs to Miſs Beaufort. Farther than this, I ſhall not—I dare not, preſume."

Theſe words, ſhifted all the Count's anguiſh to Mary's breaſt. She perceived the offended delicacy which actuated every ſyllable as they fell; and fearful of having loſt every thing, by her cold and haughty reply, ſhe opened her lips to ſay ſomething, which might better explain what ſhe meant; but her heart failing her, ſhe cloſed them again, and continued to walk in ſilence by his ſide. Having allowed the opportunity to eſcape, ſhe believed that all hopes of exculpation were at an end; and, not daring to look up, ſhe caſt a deſpairing glance at Sobieſki's graceful figure as he walked near her. His arms were folded, his hat pulled over his forehead, and his long dark eyelaſhes ſhading his downward eyes, imparted a dejection to his whole air, which wrapped her weeping heart round and round with regretful pangs. "Ah!" thought ſhe, "though the offſpring

offspring of but one moment, they will prey on my peace for ever."

At the turning of a little wooded knoll, this silent and pensive pair heard the sound of some one on the other side, walking swiftly through the heaps of dried leaves. In a minute after, Sir Robert Somerset approached them.

Whilst his father advanced smiling towards him, Thaddeus attempted to dispel the gloom of his countenance; but not succeeding, he bowed abruptly to the agitated Mary; and hastily said, "I will leave Miss Beaufort in your protection, sir, and go myself and see whether or not Lady Albina be recovered from her fatigue."

"I thought to find you all together," returned Sir Robert; "Where is her ladyship?"

"I left her with Pembroke in a hut by the river;" said Thaddeus, and bowing again, he hurried away, whilst his father called after him to return in a few minutes, and accompany him in a walk.

This immediate deſertion of Sobieſki, when he had come expreſsly to attend her to lady Albina, nearly overwhelmed Miſs Beaufort's before exhauſted ſpirits: hardly knowing whether to remain or to retreat, ſhe was attempting the latter, when her uncle caught her by the arm.

"Stay?" cried he, "why Mary, you ſurely would not leave me alone?"

Miſs Beaufort's tears had guſhed over her eyes, the moment her back was turned; and as Sir Robert drew her towards him, to his extreme amazement he ſaw that ſhe was weeping. At a ſight ſo unexpected, the ſmile of hilarity left his lips. Putting his arm tenderly round her waiſt, (for now that her diſtreſs had diſcovered itſelf, her agitation became ſo great that ſhe could hardly ſtand,) he inquired in an affectionate voice, what afflicted her?

She anſwered by ſobs only; until finding it impoſſible to break away from her uncle's arms ſhe hid her face in his boſom, and gave a looſe to the full tide of her tears.

Sir

Sir Robert, recollecting the ſtrange haſte in which Thaddeus hurried from them; and remembering Miſs Beaufort's generoſity to him in town, followed by her ſucceeding melancholy, at once united theſe circumſtances with her preſent confuſion; and conceiving an inſtantaneous ſuſpicion of the reality, preſſed her with redoubled affection to his boſom.

"I fear, my deareſt girl," ſaid he, "that ſomething diſagreeable has happened between you and the Count Sobieſki? Perhaps he has offended you? Perhaps he has found my ſweet Mary too amiable?"

Miſs Beaufort, alarmed at this ſuppoſition; after a ſhort ſtruggle, anſwered, "O no, ſir! It is I who have offended him. He thinks that I pride myſelf on the inſignificant ſervices which I rendered to him in London."

This reply convinced the Baronet that he had not been premature in his judgment; and, with a new-born delight ſpringing in his ſoul, he inquired why ſhe thought

ſo? Had ſhe given him any reaſon to believe ſo?

Mary trembled at ſaying more. Dreading that every word ſhe might utter would betray how highly ſhe prized the Count's eſteem; ſhe faultered, heſitated, ſtopped. Sir Robert put the queſtion a ſecond time in different terms.

"My loved Mary," ſaid he, ſeating her by him on the trunk of a tree, which had been newly felled, "I am ſincerely anxious that you and this young nobleman ſhould regard each other as friends: he is very dear to me; and you cannot doubt, my ſweet girl, my affection for yourſelf. Tell me, therefore, the cauſe of this little miſunderſtanding."

Miſs Beaufort took courage at the kindneſs of this ſpeech. Drying her glowing eyes, though ſtill concealing them with a handerchief, ſhe replied in a firmer voice, "I believe, ſir, the fault lies totally on my ſide. The Count Sobieſki met me on the terrace, and thanked me for what

I had

I had done for him. I acted very weakly; I was confused. Indeed I know not what he said; but he fell upon his knees, and I became so disconcerted,—so frightened, of his having attributed my behaviour to indelicacy or forwardness, that I answered something which offended him. And I am sure, he now thinks me inhuman and proud."

Sir Robert kissed her throbbing forehead, as she ended this rapid and hardly articulate explanation.

"Tell me candidly, my dearest Mary!" said he, "Can you believe that a man of Sobieski's disposition, would kneel to a woman whom he did not both respect and love? Simple gratitude, my dear girl, is not so earnest. You have said enough to convince me, whatever may be your sentiments, that you are the mistress of his fate: and, if he should mention it to me, may I tell him the scene which has now passed between us? May I tell him that its just inference would requite his ten-

derneſs with more than your thanks and beſt wiſhes!"

Sir Robert ended the ſentence in a gay tone; but Miſs Beaufort, whoſe nice ſenſibility believed that the Count muſt now deſpiſe her, looked down to conceal the wretchedneſs which ſpoke through her eyes, and with a half-ſuppreſſed ſigh, anſwered; "I will not deny that I deeply eſteem the Count Sobieſki. I admired his character before I ſaw him: and when I ſaw him, although ignorant that it was he, my reſpect increaſed. Yet, I never have aſpired to any ſhare in his heart, or even his remembrance: I could not have the preſumption. Therefore, my dear uncle," added ſhe, laying her trembling hand on his arm, "I beſeech you, as you value my feelings, my peace of mind! never to breathe a ſyllable of my weakneſs to him I think," added ſhe, claſping her hands with energy, and forgetting the force of her expreſſion, "I would ſooner ſuffer death than loſe his eſteem."

"And

"And yet," inquired Sir Robert, "you will at ſome future period give your hand to another man?"

Mary, who did not conſider the extent of this inſidious queſtion, anſwered with fervour, "Never.—I never can be happier than I am," added ſhe, with breathleſs haſte, ſeeing by the ſmile on Sir Robert's lips, that far more had been declared by her manner, than the words intended. Fearful of betraying herſelf farther, ſhe begged permiſſion to retire to the houſe.

The Baronet, now looking very ſerious, took her hand; and re-ſeating her by him, ſaid, "No, my deareſt Mary; you ſhall not leave me, unleſs you honeſtly avow what are your true ſentiments of the Count Sobieſki. You know, my ſweet girl, that I have tried to make you regard me as a father; to induce you to receive from my love the treble affection of your deceaſed parents, and my lamented wife. If my dear niece do not

deny this, she cannot treat me with reserve?"

Miss Beaufort was unable to restrain her tears. Sir Robert continued.

"I will not overwhelm your delicacy by repeating the inquiry, whether I have mistaken the source of your recent emotion; only allow me to bestow some encouragement on the Count's attachment, should he claim my services in its behalf?"

Mary snatched her uncle's hand to her lips, and kissing it, whilst her dropping tears fell upon it, threw herself impetuously on her knees, and replied in a timid voice; "I should be a monster of ingratitude, could I hide any thing from you my dearest sir, after all this kindness! I confess, that I do regard the Count Sobieski more than any being on earth. Who could see and know him, and think it possible to love another?"

"And you shall be his! my darling Mary!"

Mary!" cried the Baronet, mingling his own bliſsful tears with her's; "I once hoped to have contrived an attachment between you and Pembroke, but Heaven has decreed it better. When you and Thaddeus are united, I ſhall be happy; I may then die in peace."

Miſs Beaufort ſighed heavily. She could not participate in her uncle's rapture. She thought that ſhe had inſulted and diſguſted the Count by her late behaviour; and was opening her lips to urge it again, when the object of their converſation appeared at a little diſtance coming towards them. Full of renewed trepidation, ſhe burſt from the Baronet's hand: and taking to flight, left her uncle to meet Sobieſki alone.

Sir Robert's anxious queſtion received a more rapid reply from Thaddeus, than had proceeded from the reluctant Miſs Beaufort. The animated gratitude of Sobieſki; the ardent, yet reſpectful manner with which he declared her eminence

above all other women, soon convinced the Baronet, that Mary's retreating delicacy had misinformed her. A complete explanation was the consequence; and Thaddeus, who had not been more sanguine in his hopes, than his lovely mistress was in her's, allowed the clouds over his sunny eyes to disappear.

Sir Robert, impatient to see these two beings, so dear to his heart, repose confidence in each other's affection, the moment he returned to the house, asked his sister for Miss Beaufort. Mrs. Dorothy having replied, that she had seen her about half an hour ago retire to her own apartments, the Baronet sent a servant upstairs, to beg that she would meet him in the library.

This message found her in a paroxysm of distress. She reproached herself for her imprudence, her temerity, her unwomanly conduct, in having given away her heart to a man who never had required it. She remembered, that her weakness,

not her ſincerity, betrayed this humiliating ſecret to Sir Robert; and nearly at her wit's end, with a beating heart, ſhe was traverſing the room, almoſt hoping that ſhe was in a miſerable dream, when her maid entered with the Baronet's commands.

Diſdaining herſelf, and determining to regain ſome portion of her own reſpect by ſteadily oppoſing all her uncle's deluding hopes, with an aſſumed ſerenity ſhe arrived at the ſtudy door. She laid her hand on the lock, but the moment it yielded to her touch, all her firmneſs vaniſhed; and trembling and pale as death, ſhe appeared before him.

Sir Robert, having ſupported her to a chair; with the moſt affectionate and delicate expreſſions of paternal affection, repeated to her the ſum of his converſation with the Count. Mary was almoſt wild at this diſcourſe. So inconſiſtent and erratic is the paſſion of love, when it reigns in a woman's breaſt; ſhe forgot

in an instant, the looks and voice of Thaddeus; she forgot that tender parting letter, which even then she treasured in her bosom; she forgot her terror of having forfeited him, by her affected coldness alone; and dreading that the first proposal of their union had proceeded from her uncle, she buried her agitated face in her hands, and exclaimed; "O sir! I fear that you have made me for ever hateful in my own eyes, and despicable in those of the Count Sobieski!"

Sir Robert tried to assure her, that she alarmed herself without a cause; but she would not, she could not be pacified: she believed that her delicacy had been made a rash sacrifice; and was sitting gloomily weeping on a window-seat, when the Baronet gently added, "Well, Mary, since I cannot prevail over this strange incredulity, I will call in a more powerful pleader."

He rose and opened the door which led to the dining-room. Miss Beaufort instantly

got

got up, and flying to the oppoſite door, would have retreated, had not Sir Robert ſuddenly thrown himſelf in her way. He threw his arm about her waiſt, and turning her round, ſhe ſaw the Count, who had entered, ſtanding, and regarding her with an anxiety, which covered her before pale features with bluſhes.

His father bid him come near. Sobieſki obeyed, though with a ſtep that expreſſed how reluctant he was to oppreſs the woman whom he ſo truly loved. Mary's face was now hidden in her uncle's boſom. Sir Robert put her almoſt lifeleſs hand into that of his ſon, who dropping on his knee, ſaid in an agitated voice, "Deareſt Miſs Beaufort, do you really recal thoſe cruel words which you directed to me this morning? May I indulge myſelf in the idea that I am bleſſed with your eſteem?"

She could not reply, but whiſpered to her uncle, "Pray Sir, deſire the Count to riſe! I am already ſufficiently overwhelmed."

"My

"My ſweet Mary!" returned the Baronet, preſſing her in his arms, "this is no time for deception on either ſide. I know both your hearts. Riſe, Thaddeus;" ſaid he to the Count, whilſt he locked both their hands within his, "Take him, Mary! receive from your uncle his moſt precious gift; my matchleſs and injured ſon."

The ſhock which the firſt part of this ſpeech occaſioned Miſs Beaufort, would have ſunk her exhauſted ſpirits to inſenſibility, had not the extraordinary aſſertion at its end, arouſed and ſurpriſed her.

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed ſhe, "What do you mean, my dear uncle?"

"Thaddeus will explain all to you," returned he. "May heaven bleſs you both! I leave you together; and from him you will be confirmed in the truth of what I ſay."

Mary was too much aſtoniſhed to think of following her uncle out of the room. She ſunk on a ſeat, and turning her eyes full of amazement towards the Count,

Count, seemed to demand an explanation. Thaddeus, who still retained her passive hand pressed it warmly to his heart; and whilst his effulgent eyes were beaming transport and love, he imparted to her, a concise, but impressive narrative of his relationship with Sir Robert, and their late arrangement. He touched with short, yet ardent enthusiasm, on the virtues of his mother; he acknowledged the unbounded gratitude which was due to that God who had so wonderfully conducted him to find a parent and a home in England; and with renewed pathos of look and manner, ratified the proffer which Sir Robert had made of his heart and hand.

Mary listened with uncontroulable emotion to this interesting detail. Her eyes overflowed: their ingenuous language, enforced by the eloquent blood which glowed on her cheek, did not require the medium of words to declare what was passing in her mind. Thaddeus gazed on her with a certainty of bliss, which pene-

trated

trated the soul until its raptures almost amounted to pain. The heart may ache with joy: neither sighs nor language could express what passed in the Count's; he held her hand to his lips; his other arm fell unconsciously round her waist; and in a moment he found that he had pressed her to his breast. His heart beat violently. Miss Beaufort rose instantaneously from her chair; but her pure nature needed no disguise; she looked up to him, whilst her blushing eyes were raining down tears of delight, and pronounced in a trembling voice, "Tell my dear uncle, that Mary Beaufort glories in the means by which she becomes his daughter."

She moved to the door. Thaddeus, whose full tide of transport denied him utterance, only clasped her hands again to his lips and bosom; then relinquishing them with reluctance, he suffered her to quit the room.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

CONCLUSION.

THE magnificent eſtabliſhment which this projected union offered to Sobieſki, ſeemed to heal the yet bleeding conſcience of Sir Robert Somerſet. Although he had acquieſced in the Count's generous ſurrender of the family honours, his heart remained ill at eaſe. Every dutiful expreſſion from this long neglected ſon, ſtabbed him with availing remorſe. Conſcious that his criminal marriage with Pembroke's mother deprived the ſon of Thereſa of his juſt inheritance, he could never meet Sobieſki's filial attentions, without enduring pangs of ſelf-reproach, which imbittered all his joy. Miſs Beaufort's avowed and returned affection, at once removed the ſting of this inceſſant recollection:

Miſtreſs

Miſtreſs of immenſe wealth, her hand would not only put the injured Thaddeus in poſſeſſion of thoſe pure delights dependent on mutual ſympathy of ſoul, but would empower his munificent ſpirit, again to exert itſelf in the diſpoſal of an almoſt princely fortune.

Such meditations having followed the now tranquillized Baronet to his pillow, they brought him into the breakfaſt parlour next day, full of that calm pleaſure, which promiſes a ſteady continuance. The happy family were aſſembled. Miſs Dorothy ſaluted her brother, whoſe brightened eye declared that he had ſomething pleaſant to communicate; and he did not keep her a moment in ſuſpenſe. With the firſt diſh of coffee which was poured out, his grateful heart unburdened itſelf of the delightful tidings, that before the preſent month ſhould expire, Miſs Beaufort would give her hand to the Count Sobieſki.

Pembroke was the only hearer who did not

not expreſs ſurpriſe at this declaration; the tranſported Thaddeus had flown to his bed-ſide the preceding night, and with a bounding and enraptured heart, related the whole of the recent ſcenes.

During Sir Robert's animating ſpeech, Mary's bluſhing, yet triumphant eyes, ſought a veil in a branch of geranium, which ſhe held in her trembling hand, and affected to ſmell.

Mrs. Dorothy roſe from her chair; her heightened colour, and glittering eyes, ſpoke more than her lips, when ſhe preſſed, firſt her niece, and then the Count Sobieſki, in her venerable arms.

"Heaven bleſs you both!" cried ſhe. "This marriage will be the glory of my age."

Miſs Beaufort turned from the embrace of her aunt, to meet the warm congratulations of Pembroke. Whilſt he kiſſed her burning cheek, he whiſpered loud enough for every one to hear; "And why may I not participate in my good aunt's triumph?

umph? Attempt it, dear Mary! if you can perſuade my father to allow me to make myſelf as happy with Lady Albina Stanhope, as you will render Sobieſki, I ſhall for ever bleſs you!"

Lady Albina coloured like ſcarlet. Sir Robert took her hand with a ſmile of pleaſed ſurpriſe. "Do you, my lovely gueſt? Do you ſanction what this bold boy has juſt ſaid?"

Lady Albina made no anſwer; but bluſhing deeper than before, caſt a ſide-long glance at Pembroke, as if to petition his ſupport. He was at her ſide in an inſtant; then ſeriouſly, and earneſtly intreating his father's conſent to an union with her ladyſhip, (whoſe approbation of his paſſion, he had obtained the preceding day in the ſhepherd's hut;) he awaited with hoping anxiety, the ſounds which ſeemed faultering on Sir Robert's lips.

The Baronet, quite overcome by his darling Pembroke, having, like his brother, diſpoſed of his heart ſo much to his own

honour,

honour, found himſelf unable to ſay what he wiſhed; and joining the hands of the two young people in ſilence, he hurried out of the room. He aſcended to the library, where, kneeling down, he returned devout thanks to that all-gracious Being, who crowned one ſo unworthy, with bleſſings ſo conſpicuous.

Thaddeus, no leſs than his father, remembered the hand, which having guided him through a thorny but ſhort path of ſorrow, had in the end conducted him to an Eden of bliſs; his heart did not forget, even in the midſt of gaiety and ſmiles, the ardent gratitude which was due to the beneficent Diſpenſer of his happineſs.

Before the lapſe of a week it was diſcovered, that Sir Robert muſt haſten the marriage of Pembroke with Lady Albina, or be forced by law, to yield her to the demands of her father. After ſome ſearch, Lord Tinemouth learned that his daughter was under the protection of Sir Robert Somerſet. Inflamed with rage and revenge,

venge, he ſent to order her immediate return, under pain of an inſtantaneous appeal to the courts of judicature.

Too well aware that her non-age laid her open to the realizing of this threat, Lady Albina fell into the moſt alarming fits on the firſt communication of the meſſage. Sir Robert urged, that in her circumſtances, no authority could be oppoſed to the Earl's, except that of a huſband's, and on this conſideration, ſhe complied with his arguments and the prayers of her lover, directly to give that power into the hands of Pembroke.

Accordingly next morning by day-break, accompanied by Mrs. Dorothy and the enraptured Mr. Somerſet, the terrified Lady Albina commenced her journey to Scotland; that being the only place where in her ſituation, the marriage could be legally ſolemnized.

Whilſt theſe young run-aways chaperoned by an old maiden aunt, were purſuing their rapid flight to Gretna Green,

Sir

Sir Robert ſent his ſteward to London, to prepare two houſes near his own in Groſvenor Square, for the reception of his children. During theſe neceſſary arrangements, a happy fortnight elapſed at Deerhurſt. Thrice happy to Mary, becauſe its tranquil hours imparted to her captive heart, "*a ſober certainty of that waking bliſs*," which had ſo often animated the viſions of her imagination. Morning, noon, and evening, the companion of the Count Sobieſki, ſhe ſaw, with added enthuſiaſm, that the ſublime and princely virtues did not reign alone in his boſom. Their inſufferable brightneſs was rendered leſs intenſe, was beautifully veiled, by the ſoftening ſhades of thoſe gentle amiabilities, which are the ſoothers and ſweeteners of life. His breaſt ſeemed the reſidence of love; of a love, that not only infuſed a warmer exiſtence through her ſoul, but diffuſed ſuch a light of benevolence over every being within its influence, that all appeared happy who caught a beam of his

eye; all enchanted, who ſhared the magic of his ſmile. Under what different effects had ſhe ſeen this man! Yet how conſiſtent! At the firſt period of their acquaintance, ſhe beheld him, like that glorious orb, which her ardent fancy told her he reſembled, ſtruggling with the ſtorm, or looking with ſteady grandeur through the clouds which obſcured his path: But now, like the radiant ſun of ſummer, amidſt a ſplendid ſky, he ſeemed to ſtand, the ſource of light, and love, and joy.

Thus did the warm fancy, and warmer heart of Mary Beaufort, paint the image of her lover; and when Sir Robert received intelligence that the Gretna Green party were arrived in town, and were impatient for the company of the dear inhabitants of Deerhurſt, ſhe confeſſed that ſome embers of human frailty did ſparkle in her boſom, at the anticipation of witneſſing the homage, which they who had deſpiſed the unfriended Conſtantine, would pay to the declared and illuſtrious Sobieſki.

The

The news of Lady Albina's marriage enraged the Earl of Tinemouth almoſt to madneſs. Well aware, that his withholding her ladyſhip's fortune, would occaſion no uneaſineſs to a family of Sir Robert Somerſet's vaſt poſſeſſions, he gave way to ſtill more vehement burſts of paſſion: and, in a fit of impotent threatening, embarked, with all his houſehold, to ſpend the remainder of the ſeaſon on his eſtates in Ireland.

This abrupt departure of the Earl's cauſed Lady Albina little uneaſineſs. His unremitted cruelty, her brother's indifference, and the barbed inſults of Lady Sophia Lovel wrankled too deeply to leave any filial regret behind. Conſidering their abſence a ſuſpenſion of pain, rather than a puniſhment, ſhe did not ſtain the kiſs, which ſhe imprinted on the venerable cheek of her new parent, with one tear to the memory of her unnatural father.

Whilſt all was preparation, ſplendour, and happineſs in Groſvenor ſquare, Thad-

deus did not forget the excellent Mrs. Robſon. He haſtened to St. Martin's-lane, where the good woman received him with open arms: Nancy hung, crying for joy, upon his hand; and ſprung rapturouſly about his neck, when he told her, that he was now a rich man, and that ſhe and her grandmother ſhould live with him for ever. "I am going to be married, my dear Mrs. Robſon; that angel who viſited you when I was in priſon, has *wiped away all tears from my eyes*;" ſaid he, and drying the cheek of his weeping landlady with his own handkerchief, he continued; "ſhe commanded me not to leave you, until you had aſſured me, that you will brighten our happineſs, by taking poſſeſſion of a pretty cottage, which is cloſe by her houſe in Hampſhire. It is within Beaufort-park; and there, my Mary, and myſelf will viſit you continually."

"Bleſſed Mr. Conſtantine!" cried the worthy woman, preſſing his hand, "myſelf, my Nancy,—we are yours;—take us whither

whither you would;—for wherever *you* go, *there will the Almighty's hand lead us, and there will his right hand hold us.*"

The Count roſe and turned to the window; his heart was full; and he was obliged to take time to recover himſelf, before he could reſume the converſation, to propoſe the proper diſpoſitions for the ſpeedy removal of Mrs. Robſon and her grand-daughter to their new reſidence. He ſaw her twice after this; and on the day of her departure for Hampſhire, he put into her hand the firſt quarterly payment of an annuity, which would henceforward afford her every comfort; and raiſe her to that eaſy rank in ſociety, which her gentle manners, and rare virtues, were ſo admirably fitted to adorn. Neither did he neglect Mr. Burnett. It was not in his nature to allow any who had ſerved him, to paſs unrequited. He viſited him on the day of his arrival; and having repaid him, with a generoſity, which aſtoniſhed even the good money-lender, he took his

ſword, with the other relics of what were once ſo dear, and preſſing them mournfully, yet gratefully, to his breaſt, reentered Sir Robert's carriage and drove home.

Thaddeus next directed his ſteps to Dr. Cavendiſh's. He found his worthy friend at home, who received him with a welcome, which was increaſed to tranſport, when Thaddeus told him, with a ſmiling countenance that he was that Sobieſki, about whoſe wayward fate he had aſked ſo many ill-anſwered queſtions. The aſtoniſhed and delighted doctor, embraced him with an ardour, which ſpoke better than language his admiration and eſteem. His amazement having ſubſided, he was diſcourſing with animated intereſt, on events, at once ſo fatal and ſo glorious to Sobieſki, when a gentleman was announced by the name of Mr. Hopetown. He entered, and Dr. Cavendiſh, at the ſame time, introducing Thaddeus as the Count Sobieſki, Mr. Hopetown fixed his eyes upon him, with

with an expreſſion which neither of the friends could comprehend. Dr. Cavendiſh, a little diſconcerted at the merchant's rudeneſs, attempted to draw off the ſteadineſs of his gaze, by aſking how long he had been in England.

"I left Dantzic," replied he, "about a fortnight ago, and I ſhould have been in London five days ſince, but a favourite horſe of mine, which I brought with me, fell ſick at Harwich, and I waited until he was well enough to travel."

Whilſt he ſpoke, he never withdrew his eyes from the face of Thaddeus, who at the words *Dantzic* and *horſe*, recollected his faithful Saladin; and almoſt hoped that this Mr. Hopetown, might prove to be the Briton, to whom he had conſigned the noble animal: he now took a part in the converſation, by inquiring of the merchant, whether he were a reſident of Dantzic.

"No, my lord;" replied he, "I live within a mile of it. Several years ago I

quitted the ſmoke and buſtle of the town, to enjoy freſh air and quiet."

"Laſt year," rejoined Sobieſki, "I paſſed through Dantzic, in my way to England. I believe I ſaw your houſe, and remarked its ſituation: the park is beautiful."

"And I am indebted, Count," reſumed the merchant, "to a nobleman of your country, for its fineſt ornament. I mean the very horſe I ſpoke of juſt now. He was ſent to me one morning, with a letter from his brave owner, requeſting me, by virtue of my anceſtors, to give him ſhelter in my park. He is the moſt beautiful animal I ever beheld; and, unwilling to leave ſo ſacred a depoſit behind me when I came to England, I brought him with me."

"Poor Saladin!" cried Thaddeus, his heart overflowing with remembrance; "how glad I ſhall be to ſee thee!"

"What! was the horſe your's?" aſked Dr. Cavendiſh, ſurpriſed at this apoſtrophe.

"Yes;"

"Yes;" returned Thaddeus, "he was mine! and I owe to Mr. Hopetown, a thouſand thanks, for his generous acquieſcence with the prayers of an unfortunate ſtranger."

"No thanks to me, Count Sobieſki. The moment I entered this room, I thought that I recollected you to be the ſame Poliſh Officer, whom I had obſerved on the beach at Dantzic. When I deſcribed your figure to the man who brought the horſe, he ſaid it was the ſame who gave him the letter. I could not learn your Lordſhip's name, but I hoped one day or other, to have the pleaſure of meeting you again; and of returning Saladin into your hands, in as good condition as when he came to mine."

Tears ſtarted into the eyes of Thaddeus.

"That horſe, Mr. Hopetown, has carried me through many a bloody field; he alone witneſſed my laſt adieu to the bleeding corpſe of my country! I ſhall receive him again, as an old and dear

friend; but to his kind protector, how can I ever demonstrate the whole of my gratitude?"

"To have had it in my power to serve the Count Sobieski, is a privilege of itself;" returned Mr. Hopetown; "I am proud of that distinction; and to be called the friend of a man, whom all the world honours, will be a title, which John Hopetown would not exchange to be made sovereign of the Indies!"

Before the worthy merchant took his leave, he promised Thaddeus to send Saladin to Grosvenor-square that evening; and to accompany Dr. Cavendish, to meet the Count, the following day at dinner, at Mr. Somerset's.

Lady Albina Somerset's arrival in London was greeted by the immediate visits of all people in town, who had been acquainted with the late Countess of Tinemouth, or known to the Baronet's family. Amongst the earliest names, whose tickets appeared at her ladyship's door, were those

thoſe of Lord Berrington, Captain and Mrs. Montreſor, and Dr. Blaekmore. Lady Albina did not propoſe opening her gates to the gay world, until Miſs Beaufort and the Count were married, and they and ſhe had been preſented at Court; but having heard Pembroke ſpeak of the before-mentioned perſons with particular reſpect, (when ſhe took the liſt of her numerous viſitors out of the porter's hand,) ſhe ſelected them as the firſt which ſhould grace her table. To this groupe of friends, Thaddeus informed the fair bride, that he had taken the liberty to add Dr. Cavendiſh, and Mr. Hopetown of Dantzic.

When the Count alighted at Mr. Somerſet's door on the appointed day, he was rejoiced to ſee ſo many happy countenances. Lady Albina received Dr. Cavendiſh and Mr. Hopetown with graceful hoſpitality. But the lovely Mary, taking the hand of the generous protector of Saladin, preſſed it warmly, and accompa-

nied the action with a ſincere avowal of her intereſt in every thing that was attached to the Count. Sobieſki turned towards Lord Berrington, and the ever lively Maria Egerton, (now Mrs. Montreſor,) who both ran up to him at the ſame inſtant, to expreſs their joy at not only ſeeing him again, but in a ſituation ſo conſonant to his fame and quality.

Thaddeus replied to their felicitations, with a frankneſs and grace peculiarly his own; and was not a little ſurpriſed when Dr. Blackmore, a moment afterwards, recognized him to be the ſtranger, who had ſo much engaged his attention about a twelvemonth before. The Count did not recollect the circumſtance, until the good doctor brought the very hour to his remembrance, by mentioning the Hummums; and recapitulating the rudeneſs of the man in black, whoſe name he ſaid, he had ſince learnt was Loftus.

Pembroke could hardly hear the worthy clergyman to an end. He exclaimed againſt

againſt his vile tutor's indefatigable villainy; and turning to Sir Robert, exclaimed, "My dear ſir, the recent happy events have hitherto averted juſtice from ſeizing this man; but I muſt beg, that his connection with any thing belonging to us, may end to-morrow. Write to him, and order him to reſign his ſituation at Arunhouſe immediately.

The Baronet promiſed; and Sobieſki, trying to change a converſation which agitated his brother, addreſſed Mrs. Montreſor on ſome general topic. Capt. Montreſor joined them, and expreſſed great regret at the loſs he ſhould ſhortly ſuffer in the abſence of his friend Capt. Roos.

"How? Whither is he going?" demanded his wife.

Montreſor replied, by lamenting the ill ſtate of Lady Sara Roos's health, and the neceſſity which her huſband found to to carry her to Italy for its reſtoration.

"I met him this morning," continued he, "in deſpair about her."

Thaddeus too well divined, that this in-

creaſed indiſpoſition owed its riſe to his return to town; and inwardly petitioning heaven, that abſence might complete her cure, he could not ſuppreſs the ſigh, which her fatal devotedneſs to him, wrung from his pity and his gratitude.

No one preſent, except the affectionate Mary, marked the tranſient melancholy which paſſed over his countenance. She, who had ſuſpected the unhappy Lady Sara's attachment, loved Thaddeus, if poſſible, ſtill dearer, for the compaſſion that he beſtowed on the victim of a paſſion, which is as inſcrutable as deſtructive.

When the party deſcended to dinner, Mrs. Dorothy, who ſat next to Thaddeus, rallied him upon the deſertion of one of his moſt dauntleſs admirers. This ſtrange attack, following ſo cloſely the information relating to Lady Sara Roos, ſummoned a fervid colour into the face of the Count: he looked ſurpriſed, and rather confuſed, at the good old lady, who,

who, ſmiling, related what ſhe had been told that morning by her milliner, of Miſs Euphemia Dundas having married a Scotch nobleman at Hamilton.

"So much the better for Miſs Beaufort!" cried Pembroke: "Her jealous fears may now be at an end: little Phemy was no contemptible rival. Beſides, Albina," ſaid he, turning gaily to her ladyſhip, "you may congratulate yourſelf on the ſame ſcore. I hear that an old friend of mine is going to take her loving ſiſter off *my* hands. Come, Lord Berrington, you muſt validate my report, for I learnt it of you."

His Lordſhip ſmiled, and anſwered in the affirmative; adding that a friend of his had written to him as news, that "the eldeſt ſon of Sir Halerand Shafto was on the point of marriage with Miſs Dundas, a rich Eaſt Indian heireſs, who was viſiting my Lady Shafto, his mother."

Sobieſki wiſhed them happy, Lord Berrington proteſted that the Count was more generous than juſt.

"I vow

"I vow to heaven," cried his lordſhip, "I never knew people, the aim of whoſe lives ſeemed ſo bent on miſchief. Euphemia, pretty as ſhe is, was better known by her ſpirit of tormenting, than by her beauty; and as for the poor ſquire whom Diana has conjured into matrimony, I have little doubt of his future honours."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Montreſor, "Poor Acteon! I warrant ſhe will allot him the puniſhment he merits, for ſtepping between her and that delectable Endymion, fool Laſcelles!"

"A truce, my dear madam!" intreated Miſs Beaufort.

"She does not deſerve it of you," returned the laughing lady, purſuing the ſubject, until Mrs. Dorothy, and Sir Robert Somerſet, were obliged to call very loudly upon charity.

Thaddeus, who knew not the nature of that diſpoſition, which rejoices over the probable miſconduct of our enemies, thought this part of the converſation by far the leaſt pleaſant of the day.

Pembroke's

Pembroke's wiſh, with regard to Mr. Loftus, was complied with next morning. Doctor Blackmore having been prevailed upon to take charge of the young Lord Arun, reluctantly bore the mandate for his predeceſſor's diſmiſſion, and ſet out the ſame day for the ſeat of his lordſhip's aunt.

Whilſt Sir Robert Somerſet denounced the guilty, he was careful neither to plunge him into freſh temptations, nor to ſuffer his crimes to injure the innocent. In pity to age and helpleſſneſs, he ſettled two hundred pounds per annum on the wretched man's mother and ſiſters in Wales. And ſhortly after, in conſequence of Loftus's confeſſing that all Pembroke's allegations were but too juſt, Sir Robert adjudged one hundred more, to be yearly paid to the culprit himſelf; that at leaſt, he might not be induced to obtain ſubſiſtence by new villainies. As for the living of Somerſet, which had been the price of Mr. Loftus's

integrity, that Sir Robert determined to beſtow on Dr. Blackmore, whenever it ſhould fall.

The appointed day being arrived, in which Miſs Beaufort was to give herſelf, and her earthly happineſs, into the power of the only man, to whom, (having once beheld him,) ſhe could ever have reſigned them; ſhe pronounced her vows at the altar, with unſteadineſs of tongue, but a fixed heart. And when ſhe alighted at her own paternal manſion, in Kent, ſhe received the congratulations of the old domeſtics, with a tenderneſs, an elevation of ſoul, which drowned her glowing and enraptured face in tears.

Mrs. Robſon, and the joyous little Nanny, dreſſed in a white frock, new for the occaſion, threw themſelves at her feet, at the entrance of the drawing-room; — and ſobbed forth their happineſs, in the Count's arms; who gently raiſed them both; and embracing them with filial tenderneſs, hailed the old lady,

as

as a parent; and the ſweet girl, as an adopted child. — And Sobieſki was fully ſenſible of the favoured path which Providence ſpread before him. He had paſſed through hoſts of evils, and he now looked forward to a long ſabbath of peace and gratitude. He found it at Beaufort-Hall. He enjoyed its full poſſeſſion, when he returned to town, and ſaw his beautiful wife at the head of faſhion; not only adorning his houſe, but filling his home with all the ineffable comforts of domeſtic life, and domeſtic virtues.

One fine evening in which they were out together, ſhe ordered the carriage to ſtop in Covent Garden; when it drew up, ſhe expreſſed a wiſh to walk through the church-yard. Thaddeus complied; and before he had time to expreſs his ſurpriſe at the ſtrangeneſs of her requeſt, ſhe led him towards the grave of his revered friend Butzou, who was buried there. It was no longer the ſame; a white marble tablet occupied the place of

of graſs and yarrow. The Count bent forward, and read, with ſwimming eyes, the following inſcription:

Stop, traveller, thou treadeſt on a Hero!
Here
reſts the body
of
Lieutenant-General BUTZOU.

Sobieſki's ſoul was pierced. Incapable of ſpeaking, he led his wife back to her carriage; and placing her within it, claſped her ſuddenly and fondly to his breaſt. His tears guſhed out in ſpite of himſelf, and mingling with hers, poured thoſe thanks, thoſe aſſurances of animated approbation through her heart, as made it even ache with exceſs of hapineſs.

Thus mutually endeared, we leave the family of Sir Robert Somerſet. We leave Thaddeus Sobieſki, bleſſed in the fruition of every earthly good. The Virtues, the

Muſes,

Muſes, and the Charities, were the gueſts at his table. Misfortune could not veil Genius from his eyes; nor Calamity obſcure the brightneſs of the Juſt. Though baniſhed from his native country, where his birth gave him dominion over rich territories, now in ruins; and a once numerous and happy people, now no more; —he had not yet relinquiſhed the love of empire.—But it was not over principalities, and embattled hoſts, that he wiſhed to extend the ſceptre of command:—He wiſhed to reign in the ſoul:—His throne was in the hearts of the Good, the Amiable, and the Unfortunate. The Unhappy of every rank and Nation, found refuge, conſolation and repoſe, amongſt the ſhades of Beaufort. No eye looked wiſtfully on him, to turn away and weep; no voice addreſſed him with the petition of diſtreſs, to cloſe it with the ſigh of diſappointment: His ſmiles cheered the diſconſolate; and his protecting arms, warded off the approach of new ſorrows. *Peace was within his walls, and*

and plenteouſneſs within his palaces. And when a few eventful months diſtinguiſhed their courſe with the death of the implacable deſtroyer of Poland, and General Koſciuſzko (who was ſet at liberty by her ſucceſſor) arrived in England, he was received with the warmeſt welcome, by his now happy friend.—" Ah, my dear General," ſaid he, as he claſped the veteran to his breaſt; " I am indeed favoured above mortals—I ſee thee again, on whom I believed the gates of a Ruſſian priſon had cloſed for ever!—I have all that remains of my country preſſing upon my heart—all its valour, virtue, and heroiſm, is now within my arms!—Koſciuſzko, my friend, my father, bleſs your ſon!"

Koſciuſzko did bleſs him; and embalmed the benediction with a ſhower of tears, more precious than the richeſt unction that ever flowed on a royal head;—they were drawn from the heart of a Hero.—Sobieſki preſented his lovely wife to his illuſtrious friend; and while he gratefully

fully acknowledged the rare felicity of his fate, he owned that the retroſpection of paſt misfortunes, like ſhade to a picture, gives to our preſent bliſs, greater force and brightneſs.

THE END.

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